

SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE
A LIVING LEGEND OF THE
FREEDOM STRUGGLE

V.L. SUNDAR RAO

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FOREWORD

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee is one of our distinguished and beloved Freedom Fighters, who have succeeded in avoiding the temptations of the post-swaraj times and political life that have won over too many of our Freedom Fighters.

Shri Yajee has risen from a poor Kisan family into the glorious ranks of the elder national leaders of our Kisans. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee has lived the life of a true Buddhist humanist and is deservedly hailed as the true lover of all humanity. He discarded the limitations of caste, religion, region, and language, and achieved synonymity with the classical Purnapurusha of the Vedic, Buddhist and Jain persuasion.

Sheel Bhadra Yajee, as a respected and enthusiastic colleague, from Bihar came to me and Smt. Bharati Devi, and served the cause of the helpless Kisans from the All India Kisan platform. He catalysed the liberation of Bihar Kisans, under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, from the exploitation of Zamindars. He saved the rural masses of Bihar and U. P. from war time temptations, held out by the British and their allies fighting Fascism. By refusing to accept the guidance and slogans of "People's War" adherents during the Second World War, he stood by the left consolidation Committee, headed by Subhas Chandra Bose, and supported the Kisan trio, Swamijee, Indulal, Bharatidevi and myself, and valiantly fought the imperial-

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lists throughout the war period. Working as the General Secretary of the All India Kisan Congress (Sabha), he helped Bharti Devi, the then President of the Kisan Sabha in India, and Subhas Babu outside India. Yajee eventually became one of the four or five dauntless collaborators of Subhas Babu on the INA military front, when Netaji, as the head of the INA, was fighting the British and was trying to maintain the foothold of Independent India on the Manipur front. Yajee was busy, spreading the radio messages of Netaji among our patriots in and outside jails. He was assuring the freedom-hungry nationalists that Netaji was supplementing the work of non-violent Satyagrahis and was developing the Second Front for our freedom struggle and that every inch of our Bharat Bhoomi, as it was being liberated from the British imperial forces by our patriotic INA, will be placed in the hands of the free Indian people.

True to that devoted mission, soon after the declaration of India's independence, Sheel Bhadraji spent years in raising, in the name of INA-led Independent India, a fitting memorial at the centre of that hard-won, sacred limb of India, viz., Manipur, liberated from the clutches of the imperialists while so many other patriots were busy rivalling with each other for places in various ministries. Yajee, the loyal civilian INA colleague of Netaji, spent years raising what has come to be the most outstanding tribute to the thousands of heroic Indian patriots and forces. No wonder, he is hailed all over India as the Super Senani, as sacred as the Satyagrahis are to Mother India.

For the past twenty years, Sheel Bhadraji has been tirelessly marshalling the freedom fighters, numbering more than a couple of millions, into an effective, civilian and militant auxiliary force to strengthen secularism, socialism, communal harmony, democracy and the vital task of alleviating the hardships faced by the Harijans, Backward classes and Tribal people, besides Garibi Hatao campaign. To bring together different organisations and cadres

But, his capacity to endure and answer all their demands is simply marvellous. Further, they cannot leave his office without savouring a bite or snack and a cup of tea, which is a must to all his visitors.

By conviction, Yajeeji is a confirmed and enlightened Socialist. He often says, "without ushering in a socialist state, the problems of the broad masses of our country cannot be solved effectively". He is essentially a mass-leader, who started his career in organizing and championing the issues of the Kisans and their burning problems. He has tirelessly worked under the inspiration of the great kisan leader, the late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, whose birth centenary was celebrated in 1989 throughout the country. He is one of the founders of the Kisan movement in India and had fought many a battle against the native zamindars as well as the British imperialists.

Yajeeji followed the political line of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, and never deviated from the main-stream of the national struggle. Therefore, the fire in him never extinguished in spite of his age and the strong onslaught of power-politics. His is the lone voice that is heard in all the AICC Sessions, "Socialism is the only panacea to solve the problems of millions of helpless masses of the country". The resolution of Sheel Bhadra Yajee demanding to work for a Scientific Socialist State was presented in the Centenary Session of the Congress at Bombay,

The modern trends like profit motive, lethargy, rest or dual standard are things not known to Sheel Bhadra Yajee. He has been active for nearly six decades in public life. In 1937, he became a member of Bihar Legislative Assembly. Later, during the freedom struggle, he endured twelve years of imprisonment. In all he served fourteen years in Rajya Sabha, and thus became a veteran Parliamentarian.

Sheel Bhadra Yajee displayed the rare spirit of working among the kisan masses and agricultural workers, and simultaneously championing their socio-economic causes. He pioneered several mass movements in zamindari areas in Bihar State where the oppression of the Ryots was indescribable.

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considered views, in a responsible and constructive manner. No wonder, the leaders of different political parties and ministers of Central and State Governments are always enthusiastic to address from the Organisation's platform. Thus, the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation has grown into a powerful all-party national platform contributing effectively to the shaping of the national view-point on cultural issues and occasions.

I am happy that my colleague from the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation and Freedom Fighters Cultural Centre, Shri V. L. Sundar Rao has written this tribute to Sheel Bhadragee. Shri Rao has been a prominent freedom fighter as a Satyagrahi, an underground worker, an ardent admirer of Netaji and as an effective organiser of the patriotic amateur theatre, called Indian National Theatre, popularising the life and mission of Netaji, and INA's message in Andhra Pradesh for decades. He is one of the colleagues of Yajee in the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation and has written equally valuable and eloquent tributes to Raja Mahendra Pratap and Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, the senior most patriots, who heralded India's demand for Independence, long before the Gandhian era. Shri Rao had shared the burdens and blows of fellow Senani's trials. For more than forty years, he has been a tireless and devoted admirer of his fellow patriotic revolutionaries, and has written pamphlets and books about their selfless sacrifices and contributions. This, his latest tribute, brings home to us all over India, the pen-picture of this Super Swatantrata Senani, who has distinguished himself by his selfless and sincere services to his fellow Swatantrata Senanis.

I admire both these good sons of Swatantra Bharat. I congratulate them both for their devotion to fellow senanis.

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N.G. Ranga, MP,
Dy. Leader of the
Congress (I) party in
the parliament.

August 26, 1990

PREFACE

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, an octogenarian, is the beacon light of the Freedom Fighters' Movement in our country. There is no living veteran Freedom Fighter worthy of the name in any State who is not known to Yajeeji. The list of names of the personalities, who led different movements in the country are on his fingertips. He is the architect of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation, which has its branches/local units spread throughout the country.

At present, the freedom fighters are enjoying certain privileges like Swatantrata Senani Sanman Pension of Rs. 750 per month from the Union Government, and free medical aid both from the Union and State Govt. hospitals. Besides these, State Pensions are enjoyed by the Freedom Fighters who are not covered by the Central Sanman pension scheme. In many States, this State pension is given in addition to the Central Pension. We must be thankful to the former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, who has granted the facility of First class card pass valid for one year to every Freedom Fighter who is drawing the Sanman pension from the government and his companion to go around the nation and acquaint themselves with the developmental programmes that have been taking place in India during the post-independence era. Later, it has been extended for one more year. subsequently at the request of the Freedom Fighters, the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi agreed to extend the validity of these card passes for their life time.

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Now and then, some privileges and special facilities, such as invitations to National Festivals, receptions etc, are accorded to them in recognition of the sacrifices these freedom Fighters have made during the Freedom struggle.

How are these privileges obtained. Committed leaders like late Shri Govind Ballabh Pant, late Shri V.V. Giri, Prof. N.G. Ranga, late Shri Shibani Lal Saxena, Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Shri P. Timma Reddy, late Shri Harekrishna Mehtab took initiative to serve the cause of Freedom Fighters and procured for them some recognitions and an honourable place in the society. After a decade of strenuous campaign the Government of India headed by late Smt. Indira Gandhi, came to honour these valiant soldiers on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee year of our Independence. On 15th August 1972 the Freedom Fighters were honoured with Taamra Patras and a pension of Rs. 200 per month.

Of course, in many States pension schemes were initiated even earlier and some recognition was accorded. The late Shri Govind Ballabh Pant, as Union Home Minister introduced the first ever pension scheme to Andaman prisoners. It was in the composite Madras State, which included the present Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu that late Shri Kala Venkata Rao, the then Revenue Minister, brought out a scheme of land grants in 1948. Five acres of wet land or 10 acres of dry land was allotted to each Freedom Fighter as a token help to their families.

Here, I am constrained to say that the bureaucratic machinery, which had its legacy from British rulers, did not understand the spirit of the Government's sanction, and as a consequence, proper implementation of the schemes to honour the Freedom Fighters did not take place. Because of this stepmotherly treatment by the bureaucratic machinery, the corrupt and bogus members were also absorbed in the Freedom Fighters' scheme.

To narrate and catalogue all the noble qualities of a Freedom Fighter of Sheela Bhadra Yajee's stature is a Herculean task. He is a giant among patriots, who never waited for charities or help from others. Instead, he spent away all his possessions for the noble cause. He always lived like a commoner among his comrades. Today, Yajeeji is the working President of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation. He lives in a two-room portion in the Congress Bhawan at 7, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi.

For a long time, no premises could be arranged to house the office of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation. Although Smt. Indira Gandhi gave instructions to the Union Home Ministry to arrange for the same, it could not be complied with. When Shri K.N. Joshi, Permanent Secretary of the AICC became a Member of Parliament he vacated his apartment in the Congress Bhawan at 7, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi and persuaded Yajeeji to occupy it, as Yajeeji was also a Secretary of the AICC, in-charge of North-Eastern States and was staying in rented accommodation.

That is how the present office of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation came to be in those two rooms, presently occupied by Yajeeji.

In the same place is also located the Delhi Pradesh Freedom Fighters Organisation. The Ex-MP's pension, MLA's pension and Freedom Fighters pension besides the pocket money he earns from his ancestral house constitute the basic support for maintenance of the office and the person of Sheel Bhadra Yajee, while Delhi Pradesh Freedom Fighters Organisation shares a portion of the Telephone bills and office maintenance expenses.

Since it is Yajeeji's office-cum-residence, people visit him even at odd hours and wake him up to share his accommodation and meagre comforts. Sometimes, they even burden him with their return journey expenses. Some people pester him for tickets for elections to Assemblies and Parliament and other favours for themselves.

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of freedom fighters, INA members, pre-Gandhian revolutionaries, post-Salt satyagrahis, Do-or-Die campaigners and also the various peoples and struggles from different States into one united front is certainly a statesmanly achievement, and Yajee has accomplished this arduous task through the active support of the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi.

Yajeeji was able to win the whole-hearted support of Indiraji because of her admiration for his unique achievement of raising the great INA Memorial on the Manipur front as the symbol of India's military and diplomatic success against the proud British-cum-American imperial forces. Therefore, she blessed his efforts to unite all cadres of freedom fighters into one solid phalanx of accredited and life-long devotees of Mother India.

A number of State Chief Ministers generously offered some pension to our freedom fighters, because they realised the pressing needs of a vast majority of the ageing patriots. Sheel Bhadraraj, Indiraji and the then President Shri V.V. Giri realised the duty of Independent India to recognise the patriotic contributions made by our Swatantrata Senanis (freedom fighters) and the need to offer them pension as a token sanman (honour). By that noble gesture, they have ennobled our free nation and thus raised a spiritual memorial in the eyes of our rising generations of youth and students for the cult of patriotic services and sacrifices. I feel that it is as good a memorial as the statues we instal in our towns and villages of our national leaders.

The All India Freedom Fighters Organisation has become one of the most active and influential non-partisan and all-party political platforms in the national capital, expressing in an authoritative manner, the considered views of seasoned freedom fighters on contemporary national and international issues and happenings. It stands to the credit of the popularity and sound management of this organisation that on almost all important occasions of public concern, the freedom fighters, being highly vigilant that they are, manage to attend in large numbers and express their

From 1934 to 1936, his participation in the Kisan Sabha needs a special mention here. The 'Trinity', comprising of the late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati (Bihar), the late Shri Indulal Yagnik (Gujarat), and Prof. N.G. Ranga (Madras), championed the cause of kisans and launched struggle against the local Zamindars and the British imperialists. This Trinity complemented and cooperated with each other in their kisan struggles, and formed the All India Kisan Sabha. They were essentially recognised as the most dynamic and Left-wingers of National Struggle. Hence, even the Congress High Command did not give them sufficient recognition in the political parleys. Leftists, i.e., communist, socialist and progressive Congress men were then attracted to these struggles organized by the Kisan Sabha to fight for the common socio-economic and political rights of the Kisans. Sheel Bhadra Yajee played a prominent role in several struggles of the Kisans particularly known as Bharat Struggles, under the dynamic leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. He has been a major force in bringing about several revolutionary changes in the Bihar Tenancy Acts and Land Reforms Acts.

When one writes about the political attachment of Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee with Subhas Chandra Bose whether before or during the Second world war, or during the post-war political activities of Netaji, Yajeeji emerges as the only person who is identifiable with Netaji's activities and politics inseparably and consistently.

Whether it be the internal kick-ups, like Congress High Command's stepmotherly treatment to class organizations, banning their activities (1939), or discouraging the Left parties, Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh (1940), Left Consolidation Committee activities, or Non-violence as the principle, or creed to strike at the British imperialism during war, or later support to Azad Hind Fauz Movement, through thick and thin, Yajeeji played a pivotal role in all the phases of Freedom Struggle by supporting Netaji. What is more, he never slowed down or was afraid of expressing his support to Netaji in all these phases whenever it was necessary.

Though I am his younger colleague, our association is nearly five-decade old, running on the same patriotic wave length. Himself being the follower of the late Swami Sahajanand, I was brought up by prof. N.G. Ranga, and again both of us steered the Forward Bloc politics during second world war and post-war-period, and then took up the cause of Freedom Fighters. Here, I also take the liberty of expressing on his behalf that, of late both of us are not able to fit into any of the present political parties as they are devoid of socialist content. The regimented Communist Parties with their extra-territorial loyalties and affiliation do not appeal to us, though as democrats we cooperate with them on specific national issues. It will be a great day for the toiling peoples of the entire world when the new approaches of Comrade Gorbachev, the President of the U S S R, viz, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, Perestroika, Glasnost and the introduction of democratic measures leading to less regimentation in the society succeed. We wish him success. Moreover, in the present political context of our nation, where fundamentalism is ruling the roost either for a separte Khalistan, Naga domination, Ambedkar Backward League, communalism of the ruling elite, or casteism and what not, overlooking all progressive economic, moral and spiritual development of the country, there is little to choose.

It gives me great pleasure to present this humble pen-portrait of my comrade and elderly leader, Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, with all my love and affection for him and his family.

I am glad to add here that on invitation from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Academy Tokyo; an Indian delegation of five members attended the death annerversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on 18th. August 1990 and paid their homage to Netaji at Renkoji Temple; where the ashes were kept. Sri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Working President, A.I.F.F.O., Col. Saigal, I.N.A. Col. Lakshmi Saigal, I.N.A. Dr. Shisir Bose and Capt. S.S. Yadav I.N.A. have participated.

My thanks are due to my friends, particularly the late Shri Chhaju Ram, from whose booklet "A Short Biography of Sheel Bhadra Yajee" I have taken some information, and Shri K.P. Varma, senior advocate from Patna, who represented Yajeeji and Shri Goverdhan, who fought Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee's election case in both High Court and the upreme Crt.

My thanks are also due to Dr. Prabhakar Choudary who worked earnestly in composing and giving final touches to this Volume from the begining to the end.

I also gratefully acknowledge the editorial assistance rendered by Dr. (Mrs.) D. Bhagyalakshmi and Mr. T.V.S. Nair for his help with word processing the script and also my esteemed friend Shri N. Alexander, Ex. M.P., who perused the script.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Vishwamitra Upadhyaya, News Editor Hindustan Daily, and Padma Shree Virendra Prabhakar, for their invaluable guidance in writing this book. I am also greatful to Mr. Ashok Kumar for his timely assistance in printing of the book.

In the end I must pay my grateful regards to Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P. who has been the guiding spirit to undertake this pleasant project and also for his valuable Foreword.

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CHILDHOOD

Sheel Bhadra Yajee was born on 22nd March, 1906 at Bhaktiyarpur village in Patna district of Bihar. The only child of Pandit Shivtahal Yajee and Smt. Reshma Yajee, Sheel Bhadra was deprived of motherly love at the tender age of ten years when his mother passed away. The child Sheel Bhadra was brought up by Smt. Parvati, wife of his cousin Shri Kamal Yajee. His father Pandit Shivtahal Yajee was a religious man always immersed in offering prayers to god in a temple near his house. Known as Bhagatji he was held in high esteem by the villagers.

During his student life in Bhaktiyarpur Yajeeji's day used to begin very early as he had to work in the fields before attending the school. After completing his school education he went for higher studies to Bihar National college in Patna, 30 miles away from his village.

It was during his student days he came under the spell of the Congress and took to wearing khadi. Gradually he became an active student leader, worthy of their family tradition. He never missed any chance of participating in the sessions of All India Youth Congress. He took

active part in Bharat Navajawan Sabha held at Karachi, presided over by Subhas Chandra Bose in 1931.

In his presidential address at Bharat Navajawan Sabha, Subhas Chandra Bose observed :

“This youth movement is an emblem of our dissatisfaction with the present order of things. It stands for the revolt of youth against age old bondage, tyranny and oppression. It seeks to create a new and better world for ourselves and for humanity by removing all shackles and giving the fullest scope to the creative activity of mankind. The youth movement therefore, is not an additional or exotic growth superimposed on the movements of today. It is genuine, independent, and main human nature”,

During the 1930-1932 Mass Satyagraha Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, Shri Yajee was the director of Congress organization of Patna District. He offered his memorable services to the nation, by organising batches of people to partake in Satyagraha Movement in a disciplined manner and to court arrest. This phase of history in the Freedom Struggle, inspired many a youth and student leaders to plunge into the public life. As the saying goes, “coming events cast their shadows”, today’s student leaders shape themselves into tomorrow’s accredited national leaders of millions of our masses, and our Sheel Bhadra Yajee is one amongst them. With his progressive ideas, he aligned himself with the Congress Socialist Party of which he was one of the founder members. It is only in Tripuri Congress in 1939 when the Congress Socialist party faltered and became neutral, and a resolution on the no-confidence motion was proposed by Govind Ballabh Pant against Subhas Chandra Bose, Yajee felt that it tantamounted to a betrayal of the Socialist movement as such and he resigned from the Socialist Party.

JOINING THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

In February 1934, a devastating earthquake struck Champaran, Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Monghyr, Patna, Bhagalpur, Shahbad and Gaya Districts of Bihar. This area is located mostly in northern Bihar and covers both sides of the river Ganga i.e., North and South Bihar. Each of these Districts, covering a vast area has since been divided further into two, three or even four Districts. A total of 24,000 people died, and a number of houses collapsed during this earthquake. This devastation was so colossal that the area looked as if death was reigning all over.

At the time of the earthquake, there were nearly 5,000 Freedom Fighters under the lock-up in the Patna Camp Jail which crumbled into pieces. Hence, the Government unconditionally released all the prisoners from this Jail. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee was also among the prisoners in the Patna Camp Jail, besides other important national leaders like Dr. Khan Sahib, and Gaffar Khan of North West Frontier. Sheel Bhadra Yajee invited these leaders to visit Bhaktiarpur, his native town, and accept his hospitality, while on their way to address a public meeting. They gladly accepted the invitation.

MAN OF RATIONAL VALUES

The Khan brothers, however put a condition to Yajeeji that he should offer delicious non-vegetarian food to them, as they had been starved of good food during their prison term. It became an embarrassing task for Yajeeji to get the dishes prepared and serve them in his house, because he belonged to an orthodox Brahmin family. Yet, he said "yes". His relatives and friends were shocked at the attitude of Yajeeji breaking the age-old customs and taboos. He gave a big feast of non-vegetarian dishes to his guests. Now, there was an unusual request. The Khan brothers insisted that, being the host, Yajeeji should also join them at the dinner, which he sportively accepted with a smile, lest it should be misconstrued by his guests.

All this happened like a dream, and consequent to this, a revolutionary change took place in his life. He was in his twenty-ninth year. He never hesitated to do away with sentiments, conventional thinking and rigid social customs if it appealed to his reason.

Similarly, he discarded his religious thread which is an insignia of his caste. In a huff he discarded, the Varnashrama, Dharma, and the caste system in society. He firmly believed that unless the caste system was rooted out, no socialist state could be established successfully.

ATTACHMENT TO TRADE UNIONS

Sheel Bhadra Yajee's flair for organisation, and cadre-building and disciplined way of working, have been very helpful in organising of many mass fronts. He organised Congress Seva Dal, Labour Unions and Kisan Movements. Till 1966, Yajeeji was representing prestigious Youth Advisory Committees. He was the President of the North East Frontier Railway Employees Union from 1958 to 1967. He was the Vice President of Independent Trade Unions, and President of the All India Building Workers Union and Indian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (IFITU) and the National Federation of the Indian Railway Porters and Vendors, which he is heading even now.

Yajeeji, as a true follower of Netaji, demands ban on all the strikes and lock-outs. He quotes from the book, "The Indian Struggle", written by Netaji, that if the ruling party, the Indian National Congress adopts socialism as its creed, and implements all the socialist programmes, the Government must then ban all the strikes and lock-outs and set up suitable arbitration mechanisms to settle the labour disputes representing all the units of all Central

Trade Unions such as INTUC, AITUC, HMS, AITU, BMS, MTUC, IFITU and CITU. Yajeeji has firm conviction to organise the working class people on the basis of Scientific Socialism and class consciousness, for the speedy establishment of a Socialist Republic of India.

HEADING THE KISAN STRUGGLE

The Kisan group was nine-member strong in Bihar Legislative Assembly in 1937 and stimulated political and economic class consciousness among the entire agricultural population in the country. The "Trinity", the founding fathers of Kisan Movement in the country, viz., Prof. N.G. Ranga (South), the Late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati (Bihar) and Indulal Yagnik (Gujarat) have laid the foundation, and organised Kisan Movements under the banner of All India Kisan Sabha in different States.

Yajeeji was the chosen lieutenant of the nation's accredited Kisan leader, the Late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, who fought the combined exploitation of the British and the Zamindari systems. During his early public career, Yajeeji became a member of Bihar Legislative Assembly in 1937, representing Kisan group in the Congress Party by accepting additional manifesto issued by the Kisan Sabha.

The ruling British Government announced some reforms that a limited franchise would be given to the people of India to elect their own representatives to the State Legislatures and form the governments in different states.

And, the right to vote was limited only to the rich-farmers who were paying an income tax of Rs. 500 or more. Then two or more districts formed a single constituency unlike in the present set up where each district is organised into nearly ten to fifteen such constituencies, because now every adult has a voting right. The Government further, announced certain freedoms to the Legislature and Executive Authorities. This was known as Provincial Autonomy.

The All India Congress Committee after negotiating the terms of reference, accepted to contest the elections and form the government. In the elections, majority of the states were captured by the Congress, though it was a limited franchise represented by the party landlords.

By that time, Yajeeji became a member of the AICC also, besides being a Legislator at the young age of 30 years. When the Second World War began on 3rd September 1939, Gandhiji was hesitant to start the struggle for freedom, and kept the Indian National Congress in a dilemma, since Jawaharlal Nehru characterised the war as anti-Fascist and urged that we should not stab the British in the back. Shri Subhas Chandra Bose differed with him. All radical and revolutionary forces rallied behind the independent leadership of Subhas Bose. These forces were known as the left wing of the Congress. The rapport formed between Subhas and the Kisan Sabha, naturally inspired all progressive forces. This report led to the Anti-Compromise conference, parallel to the Indian National Congress Annual Convention, held at Ramgarh (Bihar) on 19 and 20 March 1940. During this period, Yajeeji was seen moving about and contacting firebrands like the Late Sardar Sardul Singh Gavasheer, Lala Shankar Lal, V.D. Tripathi, Muthuramalinga Thewaro, Mukundalal Sircar, Indulal Yagnik, Maulavi Asrafuddin Ahmed Choudhary, Abdul Rahaman and Sarvasri Prof. N.G. Ranga, H.V. Kamath, Imdad Sabri and several others. Shri Yajee was the chief organiser of this Anti-Compromise Conference.

May I also add here, that some members and leaders of the Congress High Command tried to discourage and

influence the people who were in charge of constructing pandals and the contractors, to sabotage the arrangements of the Anti-Compromise Conference, deliberately, dubbing it as Anti-Congress Conference ?

Let me explain the creeping neurosis of the Congress at the commencement of the Second World War. The High Command was opposed to any or all the class organisations whether it was Kisan, Labour, Students, or Youth organisation. All the leaders and their activities were kept under observation. They were dubbed as believers in class struggle, violence and Marxian ideology. But the High Command was incapable of preventing their place of honour and recognition in the anti-imperialist struggle, though they tried to discredit these forces in an incisive manner.

When the entire leadership of the Nation and the Indian National Congress were at the cross roads, Pandit Nehru chose to support the rightist leadership of the Congress High Command, while Subhas championed the feelings of the progressive Left and the Socialist Front in the Congress.

Subhas Babu organised the Left Consolidation Committee under his Chairmanship. It became an instrument for the consolidation of the Socialist forces, in which Kisan Sabha, Forward Bloc, Communist Party and Congress Socialist Party joined hands.

At this stage, the Congress High Command gave a directive that all Congress workers were banned from participating in any Kisan or Mazdoor struggles without prior permission. The Left Consolidation Committee opposed this curb on the activities of the Congress worker and called it most reactionary, and asked the Congress High Command to reconsider its decision and withdraw the ban. The L.C.C. decided on 9 July 1939, that all its units should organise meetings protesting against the arbitrary decision of the High Command. Thereupon the Congress High Command threatened the L.C.C. that it would take disciplinary action against those who participated in such protest meetings, including Kisan and Mazdoor struggles.

It is noteworthy that the Communists and Congress Socialists (J.P. and Roy's Groups) backed out with indecent haste. Only the Kisan Sabha, Forward Bloc and the L.C.C. stood firm.

A few days prior to this, Subhas came to Patna, attended the Bihar Congress Assembly and the Kisan Group meeting, and advised the participants to demand the Congress Government not to resign from office but remain in the Ministry and to oppose the British move to commit India as a partner of the war.

For the firm stand taken by the Kisan Group the Bihar Assembly Congress and the L.C.C., the Congress had let loose its disciplinary action against Subhas Chandra Bose, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, K.F. Nariman, Pt. Sheel Bhadra Yajee, and several leaders in different States, including the members of the Bengal Congress Committee which participated in the protest meetings. That was how Subhas Bose and all his followers including Yajeeji were removed from the Congress in July 1939 and were banned from taking up any elective post in Congress. Let me quote here, the reply given by the President of the Indian National Congress to refute the severe comments made in the press against this disciplinary action. "As king does no wrong, the High Command does no wrong".

This deviation of Congress High Command gradually drifted to "No Struggle" theory, till the British masters were fighting Nazis on the World Theatre, as analysed by Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Political barometer on international affairs to Mahatma Gandhi.

ASSOCIATION WITH NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

When every country was preparing for Second World war, it was Subhas Chandra Bose, who had alerted the Congress High Command to organise the Congress to prepare for the final struggle to strike at the British Imperialism and achieve our Independence. He urged the Congress High Command that they could never get an opportunity like Second World War to strike death blows to the Imperialism and win our Independence. But, the Congress was indifferent and took every thing in a casual way.

Thereafter, he purposely contested for the Presidentship of the Tripuri Session of the Indian National Congress in March, 1939 against Dr. B. Pattabhi Seetaramaiah, a nominee of Mahatma Gandhi and showed to the world that progressive left in Congress is more dominating than the right wing.

Netaji moved an official resolution at Tripuri congress Session from his Presidential chair which demanded to serve a six month ultimatum to British government to leave India failing which the Congress would launch a mass satyagraha movement for freedom. The resolution was opposed and defeated by the Right wing of the Congress.

Then he exerted all his efforts to convince Mahatma Gandhi to start Mass Movement. But Mahatma did not. On the other hand, the Tripuri Congress took away the freedom of the Congress President to nominate the Working Committee with an amendment moved by Govind Ballabh Pant.

According to the forecast of Subhas Babu, exactly after six months of Tripuri Congress, the Second World War started on 1st september 1939. Britain and France declared war against Germany on 3rd September.

Then he left Congress and formed All India Forward Bloc and made herculean efforts to unite and consolidate the progressive-left-forces in the country and formed a United front, known as Left Consolidation Committee. Nearly 16 parties joined the committee.

ANTI-COMPROMISE CONFERENCE

In March 1940, a massive demonstration was held at Ramgarh in Bihar by the Forward Bloc and Kisan Sabha just opposite the Congress pandal. Called as the All India Anti Compromise conference it rallied even bigger crowds than the Annual Congress Session, in spite of the fact that Marxist parties had backed out of this conference.

The Anti-Compromise conference was attended by 21,000 delegates from all over country and two lakh people participated.

This historical Ramgarh Conference unanimously adopted a resolution to start National struggle and a call was given to start Civil Disobedience Movement. This created an anti-imperialist atmosphere for struggle throughout the country, thus leaving no alternative for Congress High Command than to forge the Satyagraha Movement.

All the while, he was inspiring the youth and broad masses in the country to get ready to strike, to jump into the mighty movement that the country was going to launch against British Imperialism and force the Congress High Command and Mahatma Gandhi to join that final Movement. During this period, wherever Subhas Babu went and

addressed meetings, unprecedented crowds were used to gather and rent the sky with slogans of revolt.

It was only under this opposition umbrella of Subhas Bose that any political party mustered courage for first time to criticise, Gandhiji and Congress High Command for its conservative politics and indecisive stance in public meetings.

Lastly he gave a call to offer Civil Disobedience Movement during National Week i.e., 6th to 13th April, 1940. Several people from all over the country offered Satyagraha and went to jails.

But Congress did not move from its neutral stand.

When programatic thrust was planned by L.C.C., in the beginning, the so-called extreme Left-Marxist Parties in India backed out and had become "paper tigers". Thus, it was nothing but disappointment all around. He felt that he was wasting his time and started thinking for an alternative which would help.

Lastly, he himself offered Satyagraha to remove the Hollwel Monument from the Calcutta street, who massacred our revolutionary and patriot soldiers in 1857 and 1858. During this Satyagraha Movement of Subhas Babu, hundreds of young men went to jail, braved lathi charges, while Subhas Babu was also arrested and kept in the Presidency Jail, Calcutta.

By that time, much water has flown. The World War had taken a serious turn, and the existence of British Imperialism was questioned. As Netaji described, Britain had become the 49th State of the United States of America.

Subhas Babu gave an ultimatum to the Government that he will fast unto death, if he was not released from jail, since there was no moral or legal justification to keep him inside.

He started his fast on Kali Puja Day on 20th November, 1940. During this period, he wrote touching letters to the Government, one of which he named as his political Testament.

—"Though there may be no immediate, tangible gain, no suffering, no sacrifice is ever futile....."

—“In this mortal world everything perishes and will but ideas, ideals and, dreams do not. One individual may die, for an idea but that idea, after his death incarnates itself in a thousand lives.....”

—“What greater solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause?”

Netaji formulated a strategy to come out of the jail and implement his alternative plans. He offered Satyagraha in jail and created a situation that public will take vengeance against the jail officials if anything happens to Subhas Babu. The then Chief Minister of Bengal, Suhurwardi, also brought pressure on the Governor to recommend to the Centre to release Subhas from jail.

The Central Government in Delhi had advised the Bengal Government to keep him in detention throughout the war period. This was conveyed to Sarat Chandra Bose.

Then the Bengal Government took a decision that Subhas must be released to prevent any disturbance in the country if any untoward thing happened to him. Hence, he was released after a week of fasting.

Hectic activities started in his house to leave the country and go on with his plans. Restrictions were imposed in the house on the movements of the family members and visitors.

Mian Akbar Shah from Peshawar had come. Sarat Chandra Bose, his son Dr. Sisir Bose, Late Arabindo Bose and others confided and Subhas Bose left his sweet home, his beloved mother, family members, and the dear countrymen on the night of 16th January 1941. Thus he had risked his life for the cause of Mother India, just as Gautam Buddha left his all, wife, child and empire in the dead of the night in search of truth. From there he went to Peshawar, then on to Afghanistan, reached Kabul on 31st of January assuming a Muslim tribal name, Mohammad Ziauddin. From Kabul, he went to Moscow, then to Rome and from there to Berlin. He came to Singapore in 1943 after travelling for 90 days in a submarine. He became the Supreme Commander of the Azad Hind Fouz on 5th July, 1943.

Here, I give a few names who were arrested from different States when Subhas Babu left India.

Messrs : Niharendu Dutt Mazumdar, Asafuddin Ahmad Choudhury, Satyaranjan Bakshi, Haren Ghosh, Amar Bose, Hemanta Kumar Basu (Bengal) Suresh Chandra Dev, D.N. Sharma (Assam), Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Sheel Bhadra Yajee, G.G. Page, S.B. Kar, Kamalkant Azad, Dhanraj Sharma, Mohant Dhanraj Puri, Kasyanand Sharma, Rahul Sankrutyam, Kumar Pasupatiantian, Suresh Chand Mishra, Karyanand Sharma (Bihar), Pt. Viswambar Dayal Tripathi, Kartar Sankar Sukla, Padmakant Malviya (UP) B.B. Subedar, Dr. Jarjisilva, Hari Vishnu Kamath, R.S. Ruiker, P.K. Tare, Dr. Shivajirao Patwardhan, Smt. Indirabai Patwardhan, Bala Saheb Marthe, G.S. Barlounge, Satyanarayana Bajaj (Central Province and Berar), Anand Rao, Lokande, Maddurai Annapurnaiah, Peta Bapaiah, Prof. N.G. Rangaji, Anne Anjayya, Kakani Venkataratnam (Andhra), Mutturamalinga Thewar, G. Rajamannar Chetty, T. Kannan (Tamil Nadu), R.A. Mondagi, Despande, S.K. Usmani, A.R. Mondagi, Mallaraj Sastry (Karnataka), Tamutnedi, Rajamani, Abdul Rehman (Kerala), B.K. Pani, Motilal Tripathi. Begudendu Mishra, Divakar Patnaik (Orissa), Senapati Bapat, Chandojirao Patil, Prof. Videsi Kulkarni, Giridgar Thakkar, Sri Buskute, Rambhou Nisal (Maharashtra), Indulal Yagnik, Chandubhai Puranik (Gujarat), P.M. Karali (Kutch), Lala Shankarlal, Imdad Sabri (Delhi).

Ultimately, when Singapore was captured by the Japanese, Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the slogan of 'Quit-India Movement'. He defied the war-analysis given by some of the national leaders that we should not stab the British on its back when it was fighting a "People's War". He even said, "if the Indian National Congress does not join me I will go alone and call upon the people to fight".

As Gandhiji moved, the entire bandwagon of the All India Congress joined him on 9th August, 1942 in the movement known as historical "Quit India Movement." The movement was launched at Gwalior Tank, Bombay the place, where the Indian National Congress took its birth in December, 1885.

AFTER SUBHAS' EXIT

After the exit of Subhas Babu from India, the historic duty of carrying on the torch of revolution to the people of India by responding to the programmes and directions issued by Subhas Babu from outside fell on the humble shoulders of a chosen few. The moment Subhas Babu went underground and left India, all prominent leaders of All India Forward Bloc, Kisan Sabha in the country were arrested and kept in jails or taken as detainees. The late Messers : Anne Anjaiah, Peta Bapaiah, Kakani Venkata Ratnam, Mukundlal Sircar, Sheel Bhadra Yajee and several other rebels from different states volunteered for the same, and consequently had to work underground. Their life was full of challenges and risks and they even encountered death. To spend weeks, months and years of such life had its romance too. Blessed is Yajeeji ; since he stood victorious through all such tests. Our country should be proud of such noble sons !

During 1941 and 1943, Netaji used to communicate his plans to the revolutionaries through the foreign missions of Germany and Italy located in Afghanistan. The risk of

collecting information from their embassies and bringing it to India, was ours, and we did receive several such communications. Later, from June 1943, after Netaji moved to Singapore, there were messengers, reaching Indian shores through submarines, parachutes and land routes. Also some Indian pilots serving in the Royal Air Force, transported some revolutionaries from India, to Netaji's camps.

The Late Mukundlal Sircar, who held extensive discussions with Subhas Bose before he left on his hazardous journey, on 16 January, 1941 from Calcutta to Kabul and then to Berlin via Rome, was a close colleague of Pt. Sheel Bhadra Yajeeji. Both he and Yajeeji responded to Netaji's Programmes.

JOINT VENTURES OF MUKUNDLAL SIRCAR AND YAJEEJI

Let me introduce here the Late Shri Mukundlal Sircar to the readers. Shri Mukundlal Sircar, who was born in a village in Barisal District (now in Bangladesh), used to be called by his friends "a Born Congressman", as he was born on 31st December, 1885, when the inaugural session of the Indian National Congress held in Bombay concluded its proceedings.

Being ill in his early days, Mukundlal could not proceed far along the beaten task of university education, but the teachings of Swami Vivekananda and the Late Aswini Kumar Dutta of Barisal influenced him in a large measure to mould his life, and thus, provided material for making him self-made man.

When he came to Calcutta, he found himself amidst the busy life of Calcutta. He started as a private tutor, and later as an Assistant to the Editor, the Late Mr. R. Pilot of the "Indian Economist", a monthly magazine.

By his dint of work and sacrifice, he became a leader during anti-Partition Movement of Bengal in 1905. Later, he

became a close associate of Subhas Babu and identified himself with the revolutionary movement of Bengal. He was one of those souls who had toured every nook and corner of the country to spread the revolutionary movement in India.

In 1907, he entered service as a clerk in the Fire Insurance Department of Ms. Jardine Skinner & Co. (now Jardine Henderson Co. Ltd.), which he continued till December, 1921.

Bengal's anti-partition agitation and the philosophy, which had evolved during the years 1905-10 and its twin offsprings, the "Swadeshi Movement" and "Boycott Foreign" movement, provided a background to his political thinking. The retaliatory terrorist movement, which came in its wake, had given jolt to his impressionable mind. Being a thinker, he felt that individual terrorism was offensive and a retaliation could not solve the problem of independence of the people. The terms "Socialism" and "Communism" were not in vogue in those days, and as a consequence, Mukundlal remained ignorant of them at that time. He revelled in social work, and retained this passion all through the First World War of 1914-1918.

Having served as a clerk himself for more than a decade, and no stranger to the conditions under which the middle class employees worked, he felt intensely for the clerks and the ministerial workers. This feeling stirred him and provided the impetus for organising them on trade union lines.

The success achieved by the industrial workers in Buckingham Carnatic Mills, Madras, in the matter of their collective bargaining for improvement of service conditions in December, 1918 encouraged the building up of quill drivers' organisation, and thus, it was Mukundlal who first organised the Employees' Association in mid-June 1919, with himself as its Honorary Secretary.

Under the leadership of the Late Lala Lajpat Rai, the All India Trade Union Congress was brought into existence in October 1920, and Mukundlal Sircar was one of the founder

members. On his return from AITUC session in Bombay, Mukundlal was questioned by his employer about the propriety of his attending the session and identifying himself with a great revolutionary leader like Lajpat Rai. It was further pointed out to him that he should not serve two masters at the same time, i.e., the employing company and the country. He gave a plain and point blank reply that he preferred to serve the later, and submitted his resignation then and there, as a matter of principle, although it was not accepted.

The Trade Union Movement received fresh impetus from the clarion call given by Mahatma Gandhi for the Triple Boycott Movement, viz., the boycott of courts, boycott of sannads and boycott of colleges in 1920-22. Then, he left his job in 1921, and opted to serve the motherland and threw himself heart and soul to lead the life of a patriot. Thus he became a whole-time Trade Union leader. In April 1922, he first organised the Bengal Provincial Trade Union Congress after Jharia Session under the auspices of the AITUC which was the first of its kind in India.

Mukundlal was the founder-Secretary of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation and was the Secretary of the AITUC in 1926 and again in 1930-32. In 1930, he was in Madras penitentiary jail, where Subhas Babu also spent ten months.

Subhas Babu formed a revolutionary wing among Freedom Fighters in that jail and requested Mukund Babu to follow it up. After his release, Mukund Babu organised the group in a proper way and attacked a bank in Madras city. But failed in their subsequent attempts to strike at Ootakamand Bank. Several of them were then arrested, and a conspiracy case was foisted against them, which came to be known as the Madras Conspiracy Case. It was defended by the Andhra Kesari, the Late Tanguturi Prakasam.

Mukund Babu was a great patriot, who devoted his entire life to the nation. Though well educated and enlightened he did not pursue any profession. He remained single. He was

the Founder General Secretary of All India Trade Union in 1920 and All India Forward Bloc, and continued in these posts for several years. It is he and Yajeeji who carried the torch of Netaji during the post-war period, and both of them became the pillars of the Forward Bloc.

Mukund Babu was arrested several times and imprisoned, and detained without trial. The total jail life to his credit was more than thirteen years. He was the Secretary of the All-India Forward Bloc from 1939 and during the "1942 Quit India" movement. He remained underground, working mainly in Delhi and Bombay, till he was arrested in May 1943. I arranged tours and meetings of Mukund Babu in entire South India during 1946 and afterwards.

He worked as Forward Bloc Secretary till 1948, and retired from active politics. After his retirement, he worked as consultant to the young trade unionist, Mr. Mendon and others in the Ciba Workers Union, the Massina Hospital Workers Union and other such unions.

The activities of the All India Forward Bloc were mainly conducted from Bombay, because Subhas Babu made his plans with the foreign embassies at Bombay and also because the party unit was well-knit. Mukund Babu, Girdar Thakkar, Chandrakant Thakkar, and Yajeeji thus made Bombay a central place for their underground activities.

British soldiers got more information about Netaji than about the men actually executing his programmes here. The army was ordered to shoot all the messengers or agents of Netaji, who were caught crossing the border or landing from sub-marines or parachutes. This information was transmitted to the headquarters, and letters addressed to Yajeeji as the head of Forward Bloc were intercepted by the defence personnel and were conveyed to the British.

Here we must remember that the Japanese had their own foreign agencies and intelligence bureaus, which were operating even before the Second World War had started. These agencies were operating in their own unique ways. If one compiles the full information both from that side and from

the Indian side, as to how the patriotic organisations infiltrated into the civil and military fields, it will become a separate volume by itself,

Shouldering responsibility, Sheela Bhadra Yajee's short stature, unassuming personality, affable style of expression endeared him to one and all. His innate qualities of affection and love towards his colleagues and friends made him inseparable from them. His personality had the advantage of playing the roles of a priest, astrologer and street vendor, with different costumes at different places, during his association with underground movements.

The Government was hot on the heels of Yajeeji and an award of Rs. 25,000 was announced for furnishing information leading to the arrest of Yajeeji, alive or dead. Finally, he donned the costume of a palmist, smeared sacred ash, wore loin cloth and with astrological charts, sat on the pavements of busy street of Bombay. Ultimately, he was arrested on Lamington Road in December 1943. Similarly, Mukund Babu was also arrested, and his residence in Bombay was searched. They were kept in different jails and the interrogation took place. Mukund Babu and Yajeeji came to know more information about Netaji's contacts and activities in India when the police officials began to cross-examine them about their contacts with Netaji during their interrogation.

From the time of his arrest, several police officials and army men subjected Yajeeji to different kinds of interrogation, and tortured him in the process. Several things unknown to him were foisted on him for acceptance. During this period, his limbs were rendered numb and insensitive, and he fainted. Finally they decided to court-martial him. A summary court-martial trial was instituted in Delhi's Red Fort. The Military Officer could not award punishment since they could not obtain any incriminating document or weapon from his person when he was arrested. So non-judicial methods were being applied till the declaration of Indian Independence. Even then, the strong protest made to the Viceroy of India by the father of Nation Mahatma

Gandhi, condemning the cruel methods of persecution used against Yajeeji put an end to his sufferings. He was released in 1945 from Hazaribagh Central Jail at the termination of the Second World War. Again in February 1946, he was arrested in Bombay during the famous Navy Revolt, on the charges of instigating the Navy to revolt and was kept in Hithur Road prison. He was released on 15th August 1947 at 9 P.M., when India became Independent due to the intervention of Gandhiji.

After his release, Yajeeji took to organisational work of the Forward Bloc party throughout the country and brought together all the fraternity of Subhas Chandra Bose, including the personnel of Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fouz), elders like General Mohan Singh, Col. G.S. Dhillon, General Shah Nawaj Khan, Col. Saigal, Col. D.S. Raju and several others who were connected with Netaji, the Indian National Army and erstwhile Forward Bloc.

It was the inherent quality of Sheel Bhadra Yajeeji to mobilise all the fraternity to work together and unite all forces for the common cause that attracted General Mohan Singh, the founder of Indian National Army at Singapore. Yajeeji made him the President of the All India Forward Bloc, sacrificing his Presidentship for the party. No doubt, this merger strengthened the AIFB and gave a great fillip, as General Mohan Singh was a dynamic leader and brought with him a number of warriors of Azad Hind Fouz. Fortunately, at that time, the combination of the Late Shri K.N. Joglekar, who opted from the CPI leadership to Forward Bloc.

The Late Shri K.N. Joglekar was one of the Founder Members of the Communist Party of India, and an authority on Marxism. He played a special role in the Trade Union Movement in our country. He developed differences with the CPI when it drifted towards People-War-Policy and joined the All India Forward Bloc. Yajeeji alongwith his colleagues of All India Forward Bloc left the Indian National Congress in 1947 when his resolution in the AICC meeting to adopt socialism as the Congress creed was defeated.

The All India United Left Front was formed at Patna in June 1948 under the presidentship of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati when eighteen left parties, groups and class organisations participated and Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee was elected Secretary General and the Convener of the Front. The Front continued to function from 1948 to 1954.

While Shri Mukundlal Sircar's vision and foresight complimented Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee's contacts and organising abilities, General Mohan Singh's personality provided the zenith to lead the party. He served as the President of the All India Forward Bloc in 1955.

Yajeeji was leading the Marxist wing of the Forward Bloc when ideological division split the party. Later, he himself pioneered the merger of that wing with the Indian National Congress, since it was committed to the objective of working towards establishing a socialist State of India. His was the lonely voice among the Congress circles whether in Parliament or in AICC to pronounce that India should have a socialist State to solve the problems of the masses.

The merger of the Forward Bloc with the Congress at the instance of Shri Yajeeji was heartily welcomed by Pandit Nehru in 1955, who offered him AICC membership and made him the Secretary of the AICC for the North-Eastern States. Yajeeji continued to hold this position for one and a half decades. This new assignment suited Yajeeji well, as the North-Eastern States, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, Assam and other regions of the North-East zone, were full of the saga of Azad Hind Fauz battles, magnified by the messages of Netaji Subhas, reverberating from Assam to Arakon mountain valleys with the slogans of CHALO DELHI ! LAL KILLA FOD DO ! and JAI HIND !

Except Yajeeji, no one else had the privilege of visiting these areas at the risk of his own life, when volcanoes of patriotic upsurges were stalking the North East. Moreover, he is a man of many languages. He can mix Hindustani with Bengali, or club Bengali into Manipuri or Assamese and

what not ! He can even speak using a mixture of the South Indian languages. Thus, he became an authority on the political and social set-up of these States.

Since 1978, he has been devoting much of his time to help the cause of the Freedom Fighters and their movement so that the Government as well as the public may give proper recognition, honour and respect due for these soldiers of freedom, at the same time helping the distressed and forgotten warriors. Later, he resigned from the AICC secretaryship in order to devote his whole time for Freedom Fighters' cause.

WORKING FOR NETAJI'S MEMORIAL

Yajeeji's services will always be remembered by the nation as he made a singular contribution to the national cause as visualised by Netaji to honour the Azad Hind Fouz and the soldiers of Freedom struggle. Yajeeji raised at Moirang in Manipur State, the INA Martyrs' memorial, which includes a library with a reading room, and a public hall. Here the statue of Netaji has been installed. It was here the flag of Indian Independence was first hoisted by the Indian National Army on the 14th April 1944. Moirang which is nearly 70 miles from the Burma border, was the advance base which was liberated by Indian National Army and was kept under the command of Col. Raturi. The INA conducted its operations in Manipur, Nagaland and borders of Assam, under the command of Col. Saigal, Col. Shah Nawaz Khan and Col. G.S. Dhillon.

This memorial complex, built at the cost of forty-two lakh rupees, stands as a pointer to any Indian whoever touches this land, and the visitor is certain to be thrilled by the saga of sacrifices made by the Liberation Army of Netaji. This, indeed, is a testimony to the sacred, scintillating and

patriotic blood of 26,000 Indian soldiers and 40,000 Japanese soldiers who sacrificed their lives to liberate Bharat. Thus, Yajeeji's name will go down in the annals of India's history along with the exploits of Netaji, for all time to come.

At the instance of the then Prime Minister of India, the Late Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Yajeeji, with the help of General Mohan Singh, Major General Shah Nawaz Khan, Col. G.S. Dhillon, Col. Kasli Wal, Captain Rattan Singh, Captain Sant. Ram, Capt. L.C. Talwar, Shri H.N. Nilamani Singh, Deputy Minister of Manipur Shri Sardar Mukhtiar Singh, and Prof. N. Tombi Singh. M.P. Late Col. D.S. Raju, Late Shri Debnath Das, Shri S.A. Iyer, and the Late General Alagappan, all of INA, had formed a national committee of the INA Martyrs' Memorial in which forty-one prominent INA and political leaders of the country are members. They are entrusted with the responsibility to help, guide and complete all the complexes of the memorial.

Since 1959, Yajeeji has been devoting most of his time to visit different parts of India and meeting the Chief Ministers of the State Governments to collect donations from them and to complete all the complexes of the INA Memorial. On his personal approach and initiative, the Government of India and the Chief Ministers of J & K, Punjab, Haryana, UP, MP, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Mysore, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur State Governments had already donated to the INA Martyrs Fund. The Manipur State Government is the biggest contributor, having donated rupees fifteen lakhs to this INA Martyrs' Memorial Fund; Government of India gave another fifteen lakh rupees, while Punjab Government gave Rs. Two lakhs, and rest of the State Governments together gave Rs. Ten lakhs, making a total of Rs. 42 lakhs.

Netaji Library, INA Martyrs' Memorial, Museum and Netaji's bronze statue in Military Uniform have already been constructed, opened and unveiled by Shri V.V. Giri,

the former President of the Indian Republic, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, and Dr. Triguna Sen, the then Union Education Minister. The other complexes, the INA Martyrs' Memorial Hall Balcony, an open-air theatre and a guest house have also been completed.

At the request of Shri Yajeeji, Shri Y.B. Chavan, Shri K.K. Shah, General Mohan Singh, M P., Major General Shah Nawaz Khan, Col. G.S. Dhillon, Shri Debnath Das, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, Dr. K.L. Rao, Shri Kamraj, Shri Nijalingappa, Shri Chandrajeet Yadav, Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, V.L. Sunder Rao, Shrimati Mukherjee, Shri Samar Guha, Shri Manibhai Doshi and other dozens of Indian MPs have visited the Moirang Memorial Complex, and paid their homage.

POST-INDEPENDENCE PLIGHT OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Neither the public nor the Freedom Fighters ever entertained the idea of reward or remuneration for the meritorious services and sacrifices they had rendered for liberating the Mother India. They never extolled the heroic and patriotic role they had played in the great freedom struggle and it agrandise their personalities.

The few sporadic instances of the some honours being conferred on a select few are exceptions rather than common incidents. Some patriotic brothers holding key positions in the Government, State or Central, later took up some schemes to provide education, jobs, medical aid etc. to the families of the Freedom Fighters. Gradually, small pension schemes were also initiated. Some fanatics and economically well-placed leaders were against any attempt to recognise and patronise the services of the Freedom Fighters and obliterating all duties of the State and the society to insalvaging the veteran Freedom Fighters.

It is the Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister of India, who was moved by the plight of the Freedom Fighters and their families, and sponsored a

pension scheme on the eve of the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of our Independence Day on 15th August, 1972.

Further, very graciously, she invited a few veteran Freedom Fighters, selected from all over the country, and conferred special honour namely Tamra Patras on more than one thousand soldiers of Freedom Struggle. Magnificent arrangements were made on this occasion by yet another patriotic son of India, Shri K.C. Pant, reminding the participants of the great patriotic heritage of his father, the Late Shri Govind Ballabh Pant.

Later, at the instance of our the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, a merger of all the four All India Freedom Fighters associations was effected, at a special conference held on 12th and 13th of December 1978 at Bangalore, inaugurated by our Prime Minister, and presided over by the Late Baba Prithvi Singh Azad.

A detailed constitution, objectives and programmes were adopted here, which has become the Magna Carta of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation.

THE VANGUARD OF FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Yajeeji is currently the President of the Freedom Fighters' cell in the All India Congress Committee (I) as well, and is a moving force throughout the nation to highlight and achieve facilities like enhancement of political pension for Freedom Fighters, first from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300, next from Rs. 300 to Rs. 500, and most recently by another Rs. 250, with concomitant enhancement of pensions in several States, as also the II tier A/C sleeper card passes to all Freedom Fighters and their companions. There are plans to arrange Freedom Fighters' visits to the Andaman Island to see the Cellular Jail where hundreds of patriots were made to die from 1859 till the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were liberated by the Japanese Army and handed over to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose by the Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr. Tojo, and they were named as Swaraj and Shaheed Islands. The plan is being implemented since the Government of India has sanctioned necessary funds.

In the constitution, adopted by the conference, all important objectives were clarified stating that this organisation extends its membership to all patriots who fought for the liberation of India from the British Imperialism till 15th

August, 1947 and that it will work for the furtherance and for the advancement of democracy, socialism and secularism and to maintain, work for the unity and integrity of India and preservation, stability and strengthening of India's Independence, and to be prepared for utmost sacrifice to achieve its objectives.

The constitution of an executive committee, general body, special and annual conferences (once in three years), and duties and functions of its office-bearers were all clearly specified and also spelled out as to how to co-operate with the sister bodies, which were named.

The then Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, in her inaugural address, wished all success to this unity conference, and gave a call to all those who were still outside it to join this body, and strengthen it.

Besides five thousand delegates who participated from all parts of the country, many a distinguished leaders attended the conference. Among the veteran Freedom Fighters, Governor Shri Uma Shankar Dixit, Union Minister the Late Shri K.D. Malaviya, Ex-Union Minister Shri K.C. Reddy, Ex-Chief Minister Late Shri Devraj Urs, Ex-Chief Minister and AICC General Secretary Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in Parliament Prof. N.G. Ranga, and several MPs MLAs who were Freedom Fighters, participated.

The oldest of the Freedom Fighters, who attended the Bangalore Conference, Bramhandam Narasimha Rao from Andhra Pradesh, 101 years old, was specially honoured and garlanded by the Prime Minister.

In all respect, this unity session of the Freedom Fighters at Bangalore has assumed historical importance. Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, gave her consent to be the Honorary President, and continued in that post for some time.

OFFICE AND ACTIVITIES

For a number of years, the office was located at 108, South Avenue, New Delhi, where the working President of

the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation resides. The Government could not provide an accommodation as promised, which handicapped the organisation very much. Later Yajeeji got a breathing space of two rooms in the Congress Office at 7, Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi. Though the accommodation is very limited, it is centrally located and has been made a permanent office till now. Plans are afoot to construct a permanent office and a guest house for the Freedom Fighters visiting Delhi, at the Freedom Fighters Cultural Centre, Neb Sarai, in New Delhi. Although our Late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi had also recommended for the same it is yet to fructify.

The Freedom Fighters Organisation is a non-party organisation, does not entertain any particular party, and also does not take up any confrontation with any ruling party. On the other hand, the organisation offers ready co-operation to the ruling party in maintaining unity, integrity and freedom of the nation. The organisation is also fighting against fissiparous, communal, and regional elements in the country.

With this objective in view, on several occasions, the organisation had submitted to the erstwhile ruling Congress Party names of some aspiring candidates from among Freedom Fighters for nomination to the Assemblies and Parliament, but so far no encouraging response has been received.

AS A PARLIAMENTARIAN AND LEGISLATOR

Sheel Bhadra Yajee played an important role in the history of Indian Parliament as well as world Parliaments during his brief Parliamentary career. To start with, Yajeeji's Bihar Legislative membership created a constitutional deadlock for the Congress High Command as well as British masters until 1945. His last Rajya Sabha election became historical, as the ballot boxes of the Rajya Sabha election were opened for the first time and the election was declared cancelled which was unprecedented in any Parliamentary history.

A letter addressed to Mr. V.L. Sunder Rao by Shri K.P. Verma, a Freedom Fighter and advocate who fought Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee's case, illustrates the case in point.
Dated : 17 August, 1987.

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee was a powerful member of the Rajya Sabha till 1964. After his term was over in 1964, fresh election was to take place. There were eight vacancies from Bihar Legislative Assembly. On the request of the Congress Party, Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, alongwith five other Congress candidates, contested the election from Bihar. The

Congress was then in power, and the MLAs were voters. The election was held on March 26, 1964.

Shri Rajendra Prasad Jain, a close relative of Shri Shanti Prasad Jain (Dalmia Group) jumped into the electoral fray without any political background. He was not fielded by any party and was not even a permanent resident of Bihar. He became a voter and contested.

At that time, Shri K.B. Sahay was the Chief Minister of Bihar. A three-line whip was issued by him directing all Congress MLAs to vote for the Congress candidates, including Shri Yajee. The Chief Whip decided the votes of all Congress MLAs in such a way that all the six Congress candidates may secure more than the number required to get elected. Shri Yajee, being very honest and important candidate, was sure to be elected by party votes allotted in his favour. No one was in doubt about his success.

By the advent of Shri Jain, a capitalist in the field, other Congress candidates became very cautious, but Shri Yajee had no doubt about the voters, who were all Congress MLAs. It could not be visualised that money knows no morality or whip. At the end of the counting, it was found that Shri Rajendra Prasad Jain had received majority of votes and was declared elected. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, a great leader and freedom fighter, was thus betrayed, and defeated. Obviously, the voters allotted in his quota did not vote in his favour.

Shri Yajee, who always stood ahead for the country and for a public cause decided to face this challenge. He filed an election petition before the Election Tribunal, Patna, against Shri Rajendra Prasad Jain and charged him to have committed corrupt practice of bribery.

Shri Yajee was more anxious to expose the bribe-givers and bribe-takers in the democratic elections than to be the Member of the Rajya Sabha. He then moved from one voter to another and discovered the activities of Shri Jain. He made out a sample case in order to detect as to who violated the party whip and voted in favour of Shri Jain. He also discovered as to who were the MLAs that did not succumb

to the big purse of Shri Jain. In his election petition, he submitted a sample list of both categories of the MLAs.

The case was conducted by Shri K.P. Verma, Senior Advocate, who later on became the Advocate General of Bihar. After examining the prima-facie evidence, Shri Verma moved the Election Tribunal to open the ballot papers polled in favour of Shri Jain, in order to settle the dispute. This petition was hotly contested. When the Tribunal allowed the petition to open the ballots of Shri Jain he moved the High Court against this order on the ground of security of the votes. The High Court, after hearing both the parties rejected the petition of Shri Jain.

The ballot papers polled in favour of Shri Jain were opened and it was found that, for money, many members violated the three-line whip and the party mandate.

Shri Yajee also exposed, and proved before the Court the case of bribery and those MLAs who accepted the offer of huge sums of money from Shri Jain, who was disqualified for six years.

Shri Jain appealed before the Patna High Court. Renowned lawyers like Shri Nageshwar Prasad, Shri Mahabir Prasad, and others were engaged by him, but his appeal was dismissed by the High Court on 3-3-1966. Shri Jain, thereafter, moved the Supreme Court, and there also, his appeal was dismissed on 21-2-1967.

It was a historical case in the life of Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, who fought the case for three years like real fighter for justice, and proved before the country that he will not even allow the secrecy of votes to come in way of purity of democratic election. There is no doubt that after this episode, the incidence of bribery in elections of Rajya Sabha in Bihar has come down. After winning in the case, Shri Yajee left his seat for others."

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K.P. Verma
Advocate

The first time, when Yajeeji became a Member of Rajya Sabha, Pandit Nehru affectionately told him, "You will have a good future in politics". Immediately, Yajeeji said to Panditji, "Do you wish to make me a Minister one day, but it is my conviction that I should not accept any ministerial post in my life". In reply, when Panditji asked him not to make any hard and fast rules like that, Yajeeji said "no".

In this regard, I also recall another esteemed follower of Netaji, the Late Shri H.V. Kamath. When I told him that according to the Press reports he would have become a Minister within a day or two during Janta regime, he pounced upon me and said, "Mr. Sunder Rao, don't you know this much that I would never accept that dirty job of a Minister ship? I have many more important things to do than this". This is the political stature of Netaji's fraternity.

HISTORICAL CASE OF DISMISSING RAJYA SABHA ELECTION ON CHARGES OF CORRUPTION

RAJENDRA PRASAD JAIN

V.

SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE & ORS.

FEBRUARY 28, 1967

(K.N. WANCHOO, R.S. BACHHAWAT AND
V. BHARGAVA, JJ.)

Election Petition—Bribery and offer of bribery alleged—Facts which court can take into consideration—offer of bribe whether must be of specific amount to be corrupt practice.

Letters Patent—Difference among Judges constituting Division Bench—Reference whether can be made to a single Judge—‘Bench’ whether includes single Judge.

Respondent No. 1 challenged the election of the appellant to the Rajya Sabha on the alleged ground of corrupt practice consisting of bribery as well as offer of bribery. The Tribunal held that both the above mentioned types of corrupt practices were proved against the appellant. The High Court upheld the order of the Tribunal, holding only

that offer of bribe in two cases was proved. The appellant came to this Court with certificate. It was urged that (i) when the Division Bench which originally heard the appeal, on difference arising among the Judges constituting it, asked for a reference to another Bench, the Chief Justice had no power under Art. 28 of the Letters Patent to refer the matter to single Judge, (ii) this Court should examine the evidence as to offer of bribe to certain persons for itself, as the High Court had misread the evidence and had relied on certain irrelevant pieces of evidence, (iii) the facts proved did not justify a finding that bribe was offered by the appellant.

HELD : (i) Under Art. 28 of the Letters Patent the reference of the case to a single Judge was competent. The word 'Bench' in the Article includes a single Judge (21 H).

(ii) In considering the allegations of bribery against the appellant the Court was entitled to take into consideration the fact that the appellant was a man of means and that he had no political background in Bihar, where he did not have a permanent residential house. There was no misreading of the evidence by the High Court and no case had been made out for a re-appraisal of the findings (23 B-C, H).

(iii) The proposition cannot be accepted that an offer of bribery cannot be held to be such unless a specific amount is mentioned in the offer (27 D).

Emperor v. Amriuddin Salebhoy Tyabjee, A.I.R. 1923 Bom. 44, Emperor v. Choube Dinkar Rao & Ors. A.I.R. 1933 All. 513. In the matter of Balls v. The Metropolitan Board of Works, (1965-66) 1 Q. B. Cases 337, Mohan Singh v. Bhanwarlal & Ors. A.I.R. 1964 S.C. 1966 and Union of India v. H.C. Goel A.I.R. 1964 S.C. 364, distinguished.

Chaturbhu Vithaldas Jasani v. Moreshwar Parashram & Ors. (1954) S.C.R. 817 Case No. XII of Borough of staley-bridge, (1869) I O'Malley and hardcastle p. 66 and Case No. XV of Borough of coventry, (1896) I O'Malley and hardcastle p. 97, relied on. CIVIL APPELLATE JURISDICTION: Civil Appeal No. 1454 of 1966. Appeal from the judgement and order dated March 3, 1966 of the Patna High Court in Election Appeal No. 3 of 1965.

Veda Vyasa, K.K. Jain and R. Gopalakrishnan for the appellant.

K.P. Verma and D. Goburdhun, for the respondent No. 1.

The Judgement of the Court was delivered by Bhargava, J. In 1964 there were eight vacancies in the Rajya Sabha for which members had to be elected from the constituency of the Legislative Assembly of Bihar. The election was to be held on 26th March, 1964. It appears that the Congress Party put up 6 candidates out of the total of 13 candidates who were nominated for these eight vacancies. Two of the candidates withdrew after scrutiny of nomination papers, and consequently, for the actual election, there were 6 Congress candidates and 5 others. Amongst these 5 others was the appellant Rajendra Prasad Jain who was contesting as an Independent candidate. One of the Congress candidates was respondent Sheel Bhadra Yajee. At the election, Rajendra Prasad Jain was declared as one of the elected candidates, while respondent Sheel Bhadra Yajee was unsuccessful. Respondent No. 1. Sheel Bhadra Yajee, then filed an election petition challenging the election of the appellant to the Rajya Sabha. The main ground for challenge was that the appellant had committed the corrupt practice of bribery or offer of bribery in order to secure his election. In the election petition as originally filed, Schedule I contained the names of five persons to whom, it was alleged, bribe had actually been paid by the appellant. Schedule II contained the names of five persons to whom bribe had been offered by the appellant. By a subsequent amendment, three fresh names were added to Schedule I and five to Schedule II. The amendment having been allowed by the Election Tribunal, the petition, at the stage of the trial, contained allegations of payment of bribe to eight persons and of offer of bribe to ten persons. In the actual trial, however, evidence was not tendered in respect of some of these allegations. The Election Tribunal, after full trial of the petition held that respondent No. 1 had succeeded in proving that the appellant had given bribes to three of the persons mentioned in Schedule I and had offered bribe to four persons mentioned in

Schedule II. The appellant appealed to the High Court at Patna. In the High Court, when the appeal was heard by a Division Bench, one member Mahapatra, J., held that none of the allegations of payment of bribe or offer of bribe had been proved and was of the view that the appeal should be allowed and the election petition dismissed. The other member, Ramratna Singh, J., agreed with Mahapatra J., with regard to the three instances of giving bribe to the three persons mentioned in Schedule I and also with regard to the offer of bribe to two of the persons mentioned in Schedule II. With regard to two instances of offer of bribe in Schedule II, he disagreed with Mahapatra, J., and upheld the decision of the Election Tribunal. The two persons in whose cases the offer of bribe was held proved by Ramratna Singh, J., were Shah Mustaq Ahmed and Ram Narain Choudhary who were both members of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and belonged to the Congress Party. Owing to this difference of opinion, the two learned Judges directed that the case may be placed before the Hon'ble Chief Justice for reference of the point of difference to another Bench under Art. 28 of the Letters patent. Under the directions of the Chief Justice, the appeal came up before U.N. Sinha, J., who in both cases, agreed with the view taken by Ramratna Singh, J., and, consequently, in accordance with the view of the majority, the Court ultimately dismissed the appeal holding that the offer of bribe by the appellant to Shah Mustaq Ahmad and Ram Narain Choudhary had been proved. The appellant has now come up in appeal to this Court under certificate granted by the High Court at Patna against this judgement of that Court.

In his appeal, three points were urged by Mr. Veda Vyas, learned counsel for the appellant. The first question of law raised was that the Division Bench of the Patna High Court, which first heard the appeal, made a direction that the case is to be placed before the Chief Justice for reference of the point of difference to another "Bench" under Art. 28 of the Letters Patent and, consequently, the reference made subsequently by the Chief Justice to a single Judge was not competent. It was urged that the use of the expression

“another Bench” in the referring order meant that the case had to be laid by the Chief Justice before a Bench of two or more Judges and not before a single Judge. There are two reasons why, in our opinion, the submission has no force. The first is that the word “Bench” used in the referring order cannot be interpreted as necessarily indicating that the case must be laid before two or more Judges. In this connection, the language of Rule 1 (xi) and r. 3 of chapter II of the rules of the High Court at Patna is significant. Under r. 1 (xi), a case under the Indian Companies Act is to be heard by a single Judge ; and r. 3 indicates the nature of one of the orders which can be passed by a Bench hearing the case under r. 1(xi). Thus, in r. 3 of the Rules of the High Court at Patna itself a single Judge is referred to as a Bench. In fact, it is well-known that, when referring to Judges of the High Court sitting to decide a case, the expressions frequently used are Single Bench and Division Bench. The word “Bench” used in the referring order, even in its ordinary connotation, would therefore, include a single Judge. The second aspect is that the order of reference mentions that the case is to be placed for reference under Art. 28 of the Letter Patent. Article 28 of the Letters Patent lays down that, in such circumstances, the case is to be referred to one or more of the other Judges of the High Court. This reference to Art. 28 of the Letters Patent also thus clarifies that the order of reference made by the Division Bench which first heard the appeal, the case was intended to be placed before the Chief Justice for reference to one or more of the other Judges of the Court. Further, under the Rules of the High Court at Patna, the Chief Justice had the discretion to decide whether a case placed before him under Art. 28 of the Letters Patent should be heard by one Judge or more Judges than one, and this power of the Chief Justice was actually exercised when, in this case, he directed that the case be laid before U.N. Sinha, J., and his decision were, therefore, not incompetent.

The second point urged by the learned counsel was that the finding recorded by the High Court of Patna that the two instances of offer of bribe by the appellant to Shah

Mustaq Ahmad and Ram Narain Choudhary were proved incorrect. He urged that we should go into the merits of this finding on the ground that at least one of the Judges who recorded that finding, viz., Ramratna Singh, J., had misread evidence and had taken into consideration irrelevant matters. He pointed out to us that Ramratna Singh, J., had held at p. 454 of the paper-book that "it is true that P.W. 2 did not disclose the names of P.Ws. 9 and 14 to Yajee before September or October, 1964, but the non-disclosure of the names of persons to whom he had spoken about the incident when the first talk with Yajee took place is not material." P.W. 2 was Ram Narain Choudhary who was one of the persons to whom bribe was alleged to have been offered by the appellant, and P.Ws. 9 and 14 were two persons examined to corroborate him. Respondent Yajee, in the trial of the election petition, did not disclose the names of P.Ws. 9 and 14 to the Court when he gave the first list of his witnesses in October, 1964, and it was from this circumstance that the learned Judge drew the inference that the names of these two persons had not been disclosed by P.W. 2 to respondent Yajee before September or October, 1964. Learned Counsel pointed out that Yajee had admitted that the names of these two witnesses had been disclosed to him in September, 1964. It, however, appears that it cannot be held that the learned Judge committed an error of misreading evidence if he chose not to rely on this admission of Yajee and preferred the evidence which showed that the names of these two witnesses had not been disclosed to him before September or October, 1964. This may be at least a question as to the weight to be attached to different pieces of evidence and cannot be held to be an instance of misreading of evidence.

As regards the second aspect of reliance on irrelevant evidence by Ramratna Singh, J., it was urged that in his judgement at p. 444 of the Paper-book he referred to the fact that the appellant is a man of means and that he had no political background in Bihar where he did not have a permanent residential house, it was urged these facts were totally irrelevant to the charge of giving or offering of bribe in order

to secure his election, We fail to see how it can be held that the fact that the appellant had no political background in Bihar and was a man of means is irrelevant. These considerations could certainly be relevant for holding whether it was probable that the appellant would offer bribes or give bribes to secure his election. Obviously a person who had no means at all could not possibly offer bribes or give bribes inducing voters to vote for him, and the fact that he had no political background could easily be the reason why the appellant might have resorted to this corrupt practice for securing votes. Reference was also made to a part of the judgement at p. 451 of the Paper-book where the learned Judge held that a candidate who wanted to bribe a voter would at first send some feeler before making the offer ; but there was not much time left, as the allotments to different Congress candidates were made by the leader of the party only on the 24th or 25th March and election was to take place on the 26th March. It was urged on behalf of the appellant that this reference to the allotment to different Congress candidates was irrelevant. We are unable to find any force in this submission. It appears that the system was that the members of the Congress Party in the Bihar Legislative Assembly were divided into six groups and each group was asked to vote for a particular candidate. This circumstance is quite relevant, because it is obvious that another candidate seeking to bribe a voter of the Congress Party would only approach that voter who may have been allotted for voting to a candidate whom he did not like or whom, for some other reason, he would not be keen to support, while it would be futile to approach a voter who had been asked to vote for a candidate with whom he was on friendly terms or whom he was himself keen to support. It cannot be said in these circumstances that any irrelevant material was taken into account by the learned Judge at this stage. We cannot, therefore, hold that there was any such misreading of evidence or admission of irrelevant evidence which would justify our reopening findings of fact which have been concurrently recorded by the Election Tribunal at the stage of trial and by the High Court at the stage of

appeal. Consequently, we reject the suggestion of learned counsel that we should for ourselves go through the evidence and re-examine on merits, after weighing evidence, the concurrent finding of fact that the appellant was proved to have offered bribes to Shah Mustaq Ahmad and Ram Narain Choudhary.

The last and third point urged by the learned counsel was that, even on findings of fact recorded by the High Court, we must hold as a question of law by the appellant. This argument was urged on the basis that the finding recorded did not show that any specific amount was offered as bribe to either Shah Mustaq Ahmad, the finding is that the appellant had said to him : "In your election a lot of money was spent and, therefore, take some money from me and cast your first preference vote in my favour" In the other case of Ram Narain Choudhary, the significance of the offer is very clear when the actual words in Hindi used by the appellant are considered. They were as follows :

"Is Par Jain Saheb Ne Kaha Ki Apko Bhi To Election Men Kharch Burch Hua Hoga. Isliye Hum Apki Kuchh Seva Karna Chahte Hain. Ap Hamare Madad Kijiye."

It is true that in these words there was a direct offer of giving money, but the language used clearly indicated that the appellant was offering his services in the form of contribution towards expenditure which Ram Narain Choudhary had incurred in his own election to the Bihar Legislative Assembly. In both cases, therefore, it is clear that an offer of payment of money was made by the appellant to these voters to induce them to cast votes for him in the election to the Rajya Sabha.

Learned Counsel, however, urged that as long as no specific amount was offered by the appellant, there was, in fact, no offer of bribery. According to him, it was still a stage when an intention of offering bribery was expressed, but not offer of bribery was actually made. An offer it was urged, must be held to be made only when a specific sum is mentioned as the amount of bribe to be given and there is to be no negotiation about the amount. In this connection

learned Counsel drew our attention to the meaning given to the word, "offer" as explained in Halsbury's Laws of England, 3rd Edn Vol 8, at P 69. Halsbury, at that stage, deals with the meaning of the word "offer" as used in connection with the law of contract; and we do not think any assistance can be taken from the principle laid down therein. He also made a reference to some Indian cases dealing with the meaning of the word "offer" in connection with the offer of bribery under the Criminal Law. The case mainly relied upon was *Emperor v Aminuddin Salebhoy Tyabjee* (1), where the accused was alleged to have used the words; "my cousin wishes to give you Rs. 5,000" to a government servant. It was held that these words did not constitute an offer of bribery. We do not think that case is at all parallel with the case before us. In that case, the accused himself did not offer any bribe and all that he did was to indicate to the government servant the sum of Rs. 5,000. There was, thus, no direct offer by the accused of bribery to the government servant.

In *Emperor v. Choube Dinkar Rao and others* (1), accused Dinkar Rao admitted that he went to a Judge and told him that the plaintiff would pay Rs. 10,000 if the suit were decreed, but denied that he had gone on behalf of the plaintiff. Once again, that was a case where there was no offer of payment of any money by the accused to the Judge. In the instant case, the words used by the appellant clearly amounted to an offer to give money himself to the two voters.

Similarly, we do not think that any assistance can be taken from the decision of Blackburn, J. in the *Matter of Balls v. The Metropolitan Board of Works*, (2) where it was held in connection with compensation for land that "the offer of compensation is to be an offer which the claimant can either accept or reject; if it is of one sum for compensation and costs, the claimant cannot know how much for his costs. He might, therefore, be misled by it." That was again a case where the point which came up for consideration before the learned Judge related to offer of compensation for land which would be in the nature of an

offer in connection with a contract and not an offer of bribe under the election law.

Reliance was also placed on the view expressed by this Court in *Mohan Singh v. Bhanwarlal and others*, (3) in which dealing with gratification under the Election Law, it was held; "Gratification in its ordinary connotation means satisfaction. In the context in which the expression is used, and its delimitation by Explanation, it must mean something valuable which is calculated to satisfy a person's aim, object or desire, whether or not that thing is estimable in terms of money; but a mere offer to help in securing employment to a person with a named or unnamed employer would not amount to such gratification." We again fail to see how that decision affects the point before us. In that case, all that was held was that mere offer to help in securing employment with another person does not amount to gratification. In the case before us, the offer was clearly in respect of money and, if accepted, it would naturally satisfy the voter's desire to acquire money.

Reference was also made to the decision of this Court in *Union of India vs. H.C. Goel* (1) where it was held that the respondent had taken out a hundred rupee note from his wallet in the presence of a government servant whom he had approached in connection with his work, and government servant showed his stern disapproval of this conduct, whereupon the respondent said "No" and put the wallet with the note in his pocket. The facts in that case were also clearly different, because all that was held by this Court was that the mere taking out of the note from the wallet did not amount to an offer, while, in the case before us, the finding was that there was a clear offer to give money.

In this connection, we may refer to the decision of this Court in *Chatturbhuj Vithaldas Jasani v. Moreshwar Parashram and others*, (2) where the Court had to consider existence of a contract for supply of goods in connection with deciding the disqualification of a candidate as set out in s. 7(d) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951. The Court, in dealing with this aspect, distinguished between a contract

for purposes of the Election Law. In our opinion, when considering the scope of the words "offer of bribery" in the Election Law, we should not place a narrow constriction on that expression. In fact, the scope of that expression should be extended in order to ensure that elections are held in an atmosphere of absolute purity, and a wide meaning should be given to the expression, "offer of bribery".

In Case No. XII of Borough of Staleybridge, (3) Blackburn, J. had to deal with the question of interpreting the giving of bribery under the Election law, then prevalent in England. At that time, the offer of bribe was not a corrupt practice under the law there, and yet Justice Blackburn said that; "There can be no doubt that a promise or offer to cause a workman or other person to be no loser by his coming to vote comes within the meaning of the Act, and is an act of bribery and corruption. Thornlet and Vaughan distinctly offered and promised two voters that they should have their day's wages paid to them if they would come and vote. That amounted to an act of bribery on the part of those who accepted it, and on the part of those who offered it."

In Case No. XV of Borough of Coventry (4), it was said: "With respect to bribery, as well as with respect of treating, I shall ever hold it to be a wise and beneficial rule of constitutional law, quite apart from the 17 & 18 Vict. c. 102, that for the purpose of securing purity and freedom of election, candidate should be answerable for the acts of their agents, as well as their own acts", and proceeding further, with regard to mere offers of bribe: it was said: "Although these cases have been classed below those of bribery by both the learned counsel, it cannot be supposed that an offer to bribe is not as bad as the actual payment of money. It is a legal offence although these cases have been spoken of as being an inferior class by reason of the difficulty of proof, from the possibility of people being mistaken in their accounts of conversations in which offers were made; whereas, there can be no mistake as to the actual payment of money." In England, thus, the law relating to

corrupt practice of giving bribery was extended to include offers of bribery, though it was held that stricter proof of bribery should be insisted upon on the ground that there was a possibility of misunderstanding. In the case before us, the offer in such clear terms that there could be no misunderstanding. In both cases and particularly in the case of Shah Mustaq Ahmad, the offer was of money to be paid in order to secure the votes. We are unable to accept the proposition suggested by learned counsel that an offer of bribery cannot be held to be such, unless a specific amount is mentioned in the offer. No such requirement is laid down by law, and if we were to accept this proposition, it would lay the field open for corruption in such a manner as to make the provision totally ineffective. A candidate wanting to secure a vote by bribery can always go and first ask the voter whether he is prepared to accept money as a bribe and need offer a specific sum only after the voter has signified his assent. Once the voter actually accepts the offer, it is not likely that evidence of that instance of bribery will be available. The mere fact that a candidate goes and offers some money is enough to show that he has already made his offer to corrupt the voter and secure his vote, though there may still be a possibility that, if subsequently the negotiations as to the precise amount to be paid as bribe fail, he may not actually succeed in his objective. The offer of bribery in the manner proved in this case, in our opinion, clearly satisfies the requirements of section 123 of the Representation of the People Act. The decision of the High Court upholding that of the Election Tribunal setting aside of the election of the appellant to the Rajya Sabha was, therefore, right and must be upheld. The appeal fails and is dismissed with costs.

G.C.

Appeal dismissed.

No. 3. Election Tribunal : District Judge, Patna
Shri Chandra Prasad Singh
Decided on 31-5-1965.

AIR 1967, Patna, Page 17 : Case No. Election Appeal No.
3 of 1965.

Rajendra Prasad Jain vs. Sheel Bhadra Yajee and others.
Decided by Mahapatra, Ram Ratan Singh and U.N. Sinha, Judges.

Date : 23-12-1965 Dates of Judgements.
3-3-1965.

No. 2. AIR 1967 Supreme Court, page 1445.

Rajendra Prasad Jain v. Sheel Bhadra Yajee and Others.
Decided by K.N. Wanchoo, R.S. Bachhawat and V. Bhargava, JJ Case No. Civil Appeal No. 1454 of 1966 decided on 28-2-1967.

Eminent Lawyer, sent by
Sheikh Abdulla

Lawyers working for Jain :—Messrs. Nageswar Prasad, Shri J.C. Sinha and Avadeshnandan Sahai. Yajee was represented by K.P. Verma, assisted by Mr. Govardhan, in the Supreme Court.

A SOCIALIST TO THE CORE

As a member of the All India Congress (I) Committee, Yajeeji wanted to move the following resolution at the Amritsar Session of the Congress in 1956. He could not move it, as the then Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru asked him not to move it, on the premise that as it was not the opportune time. Again in the Centenary Session of the Congress held at Bombay on 27 and 28 December, 1985 the President, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, allowed him to speak on that political resolution, but objected to move the resolution on the same plea that it was not the opportune time.

On that ruling, Yajeeji said, "Pandit Nehru told this thing 30 years back, and you are repeating the same thing now even after 40 years of Independence, when will that opportune moment come?" Once again, he gave notice to move the same resolution at Madras Session held on 23 and 24 April 1988, but we have yet to see its acceptance by the Congress High Command.

Here the text of the resolution is given.

THE RESOLUTION

"This meeting of the All India Congress Committee reminds the Indian people that in every Lok Sabha election,

and especially in 1980, those parties and groups which opposed and contested election against the Congress Party had as an election issue campaigned that if the Congress Party was voted to power, then the present democracy would be destroyed and dictatorship (*tanashahi*) would be established. The Indian people accepted this challenge and by giving massive two-thirds majority to the Congress (I) reaffirmed their faith in the Congress (I) and the Democratic Principles it cherishes.

This meeting also reminds the Indian people that in 1954, at the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India, both the Houses of the Indian Parliament had passed an unanimous resolution declaring Socialism as the cherished goal of India. In 1955 at the Avadi Session of the Indian National Congress, Socialism was adopted as the creed of the Indian National Congress and later on at the initiative of the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi, "Sociatist Republic" was inserted in the Preamble of the present Constitution of India.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, twice President of the Indian National Congress, in his famous book, "Indian Struggle", and in his historical speech of November, 1944 at the Imperial university of Tokyo (Japan), and Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, leader of the Hindustan Republic Army, during the famous Court Trial, had firmly advocated that Socialism can be established only through dictatorship of the working class people and not on the pattern of Western Democracy based on the Parliamentary or the Presidential form of the Government.

And after having considered the opinion of the Indian people reflected in all the Lok Sabha elections held so far, especially in the 1980 Lok Sabha elections, and the views of Netaji, Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh and Senapati Chandra Shekhar Azad on Socialism, and in the best interest of maintaining the unity and integrity of India, this meeting of the AICC held in Maraimalai Nagar, hereby resolves that the system of administration should be based on the dictatorship of the working class, peasantry and the socialist intellectuals and further direct the Indian Union Government to change

its present policy based on mixed economy and to declare India on 26th January 1989 as the "Union of Socialist Republics" as enshrined in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution at the initiative of Smt. Indira Gandhi, particularly when Congress has completed the glorious period of hundred years of its life. This should be done by radically amending the Indian Constitution, based on Scientific Socialism and Socialist Democracy by convening a special session of the Parliament in the first week of January 1989.

(SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE)

Ex-M.P.

The Non-official Advisory Committee on Welfare Schemes for Freedom Fighters advised the Government of India, i.e., the Ministry of Home Affairs, on various matters to the Freedom Fighters. Members of a number of movements and uprisings are periodically considered by this committee for inclusion in the Sanman pension schemes. The Committee discusses the pros and cons on various issues of this nature and offers its considered views, and these are invariably accepted and implemented by the Government. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee is the only vocal and most effective member. He advocates and strongly supports each and every new proposal that concerns the welfare of the Freedom Fighters. As a consequence to the guidelines framed by this committee, all Government officials, such as the District Collectors, throughout India, are expected to show due regard to the Freedom Fighters and Martyrs. Most of the States honour the departed Freedom Fighters by conducting State funerals and bear the expenses. A few seats are reserved and are free of charge for them in the public transport vehicles, e.g., buses.

A MULTI-FACETED PERSONALITY

Every political worker is essentially a journalist, propagandist and a writer. He has to wage and conduct campaigns of new thoughts, give new education and carry the people with him. He can do all this only if he can speak, write and explain in the language of the people and communicate at their level. Yajeeji is no exception to this and that is how he became a master writer, since he is a linguist and is conversant with literature, and is open-minded to the latest scientific analyses.

He made regular contributions to various publications both in Hindi and in English. He is the author of the following titles in English : Glimpse of the Indian Labour Movement ; The Forward Bloc and its Stand ; Is Socialism a Necessity to India ? ; True Face of American Monopolistic Democracy ; American Abroad ; CIA and its Activities in the Non-Aligned Countries ; CIA Controls the Foreign Policy of the USA.

In Hindi, he wrote many a lot of brochures and addressed a number of political conferences, which came to be reckoned as his policies, permanently.

Yajeeji holds various honorary positions and is at the helm of the affairs guiding and advising his colleagues. Some of his designations are :

EX-MLA, EX-MP

CHAIRMAN	: Freedom Fighters Cell, AICC
WORKING PRESIDENT	: All India Freedom Fighters Organisation
PRESIDENT	: Bihar State Freedom Fighters Organisations
VICE-PRESIDENT	: Indian Ex-MPs' Association.
VICE-PRESIDENT	: INA Martyrs Memorial Committee
PRESIDENT	: Railway Advertising Agents Association of India
PRESIDENT	: National Federation of Agri- cultural Workers
MEMBER	: All India Congress Committee
PRESIDENT	: National Federation of Rail- way Porters, Vendors and Bearers

Yajeeji is a personification of the spirit of patriotism. He is a perfect comrade who never brought his personal or family impact to the public life. He has the habit of saying, "I am alone in this world". He keeps all his colleagues guessing about his family life or children. Few people know about his personal life, which is of course, exemplary.

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee is blessed with a healthy and loyal partner, Smt. Balakeswari Yajee, who is 9 years younger to him and gave him three sons. They are, Sachidanand (41), Achutanand (38) and Satyanand (34). The first two sons are science graduates. The eldest is working as a Demonstrator in Bale College, and the second son is looking after their agricultural holding of 10 acres. Satyanand, the youngest of the three who has passed Automobile Engineering from Belgaum and Bombay, is engaged in motor spare parts business at Bhaktiyarpur. Yajeeji sold out several acres of landed property and warehouses yielding a revenue of several thousands of rupees per month, to meet the expenses incurred on

fighting elections and to finance his public life activities including contributions to his fellow public workers.

Yajeeji is a contented man. Though he had already suffered several heart attacks, he entertains no anxiety. He is a workaholic and never takes rest nor does he give up chain-smoking. "I cannot give up smoking", he says, "rather, I will ask my people to bury me in a bundle of smokes". Whenever he says this, I am only reminded of Napoleon's remarks on death, "Brave die never, but converse die many times."

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE

1. Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Ex-M.P. and Ex-M.L.A. s/o. Late Pt. Shiv Tahal Yajee, was born on 22nd March 1906 at Village Bakhtiyarpur, Distt. Patna, Bihar State in a middle class Kisan family.
2. He was educated in Middle English School, Bakhtiyarpur, Barh English High School and B.N. College, Patna. In 1922 joined Non-cooperation movement of the Indian National Congress led by Mahatma Gandhi and brought Mahatma Gandhi and Shaukat Ali to his village to strengthen the Non-cooperation Movement and gave up his brilliant college life.
3. In 1921 Non-Cooperation Movement, as a student only 15 years old, he participated in picketing of foreign cloth shop and liquor shops but not arrested.
4. He was the President of the Bhaktiyarpur Thana Congress Committee and General Secretary of the Patna D.C.C. and Member of the Bihar P.C.C. and Member of the A.I.C.C.

5. He attended as a Congress delegate in the Congress sessions of Gaya, Madras, Calcutta, Lahore, Karachi Bombay, Lucknow, Faizpur, Haripura and Tripuri.
6. He joined western Patna Distt. Kisan Sabha in 1926 and Bihar Kisan Sabha in 1928 at Sonapur formed and led by Late Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and Late Dr. S.K. Sinha.
7. He joined Navajawan Bharat Sabha founded by Shaheede Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh in 1928.
8. He alongwith other Bihar Socialist leaders formed Bihar Socialist party in the Patna Camp jail in 1930 and again joined and merged the All India Congress Socialist Party in 1934 led by Acharya Narendra Dev and Jai Prakash Narain but Left Congress Socialist Party in 1939 Tripuri Congress due to reformist policy of J.P.
9. In 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement he was appointed as the Dictator of Patna Distt. to conduct the freedom struggle and so a warrant of arrest was issued against him in April, 1930 and he remained underground from April, 1930 to August, 1930.
10. In January, 1933, a warrent of arrest was issued against him but he remained underground from January, 1933 to June, 1933.
11. In 1937 Legislative Assembly Elections all over India, he was elected Member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly from Barh Assembly seat of the Patna Distt and became Chief whip of the Congress Party in Bihar Legislative Assembly and always championed the cause of the Kisans of Bihar in Bihar Assembly.
12. In March, 1937 he took an an important decision for his whole life not to accept the post of Minister and had written letters in this regard to his leader Dr. S.K. Sinha and the then Premier (Prime Minister) of Bihar.
13. When he entered Parliament in 1957, he had written similar letters to Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

and again to Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and later to Smt. Indira Gandhi requesting them never to invite him for any ministerial post.

14. He alongwith [Netaji, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, Shri K.F. Nariman and other Kisan Sabha and Forward Bloc leaders protested against the Congress resolution of banning Kisan Mazdoor struggles led by Kisan Sabha and All India Trade Union Congress and was debarred from holding any elective post in the Congress for three yeary in 1939.
15. Just after his release from the Hazaribagh Central Jail in March, 1942, a warrant of arrest was issued against him but he remained underground in 1942 and 1943. He was declared absconder and a reward of rupees twenty five thousand was announced to arrest him dead or alive. His property and Whipet Motor Car worth rupees ten thousand were confiscated during his absconding period.
16. He became member of the AICC in 1942 and after coming from jail he attended the AICC meeting at Gwalior Tank, Bombay on 8.8.42. and a warrant of his arrest was issued by the Central Government.
17. He was Vice President of the All India Forward Bloc but in the absence of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose he was appointed president of the All India Forward Bloc to conduct the Quit India Movement and INA struggle in India in 1942. This led to British Govt. declaring Forward Bloc illegal all over India. By remaining underground for about two years, he alongwith the Forward Bloc and Kisan leader, conducted the Quit India Movement.
18. In his absconding period he held the All India Kisan Conference at Bharthna in Itawa Distt. of U. P. and defeated the peoples war resolution of CPI and elected Smt. Bharati Ranga wife of Kisan leader Prof. N. G. Ranga and he was elected Secretary of the A.I. Kisan Sabha.

19. On urgent wireless message from Netaji from Singapore he reached Singapore by a Japanese submarine sent by Netaji for urgent discussion to help INA Struggle in Nagaland and Manipur. He came back to India by the same Japanese submarine and visited Nagaland, Burma and Manipur to help to INA Movement.
20. He was arrested in Bombay in the end of 1943 and was brought to Red Fort, Delhi and was tortured and court martialled for six months and when he unconscious for continuous fifteen days he was taken to Palam Military Hospital Mahatma Gandhi came to know about this in Agha Khan Palace Pune and he wrote three letters to Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy of India. He remained in the Red Fort torture cell for 6 months but during his court-martial trial he argued his case and saved his life.
21. After his court-martial trial and inhuman torture in Delhi's Red Fort, he was kept as Security Prisoner in the Worli Camp Jail, Bombay, Yervada Central Jail, Poona, Nasik Central Jail, Hazaribagh Central Jail, Vishapur Camp Jail, Ahmednagar, in 1944 and 1945 and was released from the Hazaribagh Central Jail in September, 1945 after the end of the Second World War.
22. He was again arrested in September, 1945 and was kept in the Begusarai Sub Jail and Monghyr Distt. Jail as Security Prisoner from September, 1945 to January, 1946 but released on the intervention of the then Bihar State Premier, Dr. S. K. Sinha.
23. During Bombay Navy revolt, he was arrested and detained in the Arthur Road Prison, Bombay on the charges of inciting the Navy to revolt but released after three months in May, 1946.
24. In February, 1947, he was arrested and convicted under the Defence of India Rules by the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Bombay for eight Months on the

charges of inciting the Royal Indian Navy personnels to revolt and was kept in the Bombay Arthur Road Prison but released on the 15th of August, 1947, when India became Independent.

25. He reorganised the All India Forward Bloc and with the help of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and leaders of Kisan Sabha, Trade line leaders, CPI leaders, RSP, All India Socialist Party, Bolshovik Party and other left groups numbering about 16, he formed the All India United Left Front and was elected Convener and the General Secretary of the A. I. United Left Front from 1947 to 1955 till he rejoined Congress in 1955.
26. When in 1955, the Indian National Congress adopted Socialism at Awadi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru invited him and the INA leader General Mohan Singh and advised them that the All India Forward Bloc now merge with the Congress. The All India Forward Bloc session met in New Delhi in 1965 and decided with thumping majority to merge with the Indian National Congress. The Congress Working Committee decided to admit all Forward Bloc members as the active members of Congress.
27. From 1955 to 1976 Yajeeji became the Congress Regional secretary of the North-East Zone. Organised, formed and strengthened the Congress Organisation from 1957 to 1976 in Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim.
28. He was the member of the Rajya Sabha from Bihar on Congress ticket for thirteen years and had resigned in April, 1972. Indiraji wanted to appoint him as Governor but he decided to devote his whole time for Congress organisation.
29. From 1955 after his Forward Bloc merger with the Indian National Congress he was a Congress delegate

and member of the AICC elected from Bihar but since 1971 from Manipur State.

30. At present he is the Chairman of the Freedom Fighter's Cell of the AICC (I) and Working President of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation and devotes his whole time for the well-being of the 4,45,000 living freedom fighters who had applied for the grant of Central Government Freedom Fighters Pension.
31. He is a prominent Hindi Writer and Journalist and edited several Hindi and English Weeklies such as "Jhankar", Azad Hind Jamshedpur Labour Times and had written several Hindi and English books on the stand and Role of the Forward Bloc on Socialism, Americans Abroad and C. I. A. Activities in India and the Third World.
32. To perpetrate the sacred memories of twenty-six thousand INA Martyrs who had sacrificed their lives in the freedom struggles on the Kohima (Nagaland) and Imphal (Manipur) fronts he collected about forty-two lakhs rupees from all the State Govts. and the Indian Union Government and constructed a INA Martyrs memorial at Moirang, Manipur, where Netaji established the provisional head quarters of the liberated areas of Nagaland and Manipur. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri V. V. Giri, Smt. Indira Gandhi and other Congress leaders of both Manipur and other parts of India took keen interest in the INA Martyrs memorial.
33. Altogether he remained in Jails in Freedom Struggle from 1930 to 1947 for seven years and twenty seven days.
34. Altogether he remained as absconder in the Freedom Struggle for about two years.
35. Received Central Government Freedom Fighters Pension of Rs. 500 per month by the Home Ministry.

SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE'S JAIL LIFE (1930—1947)

<i>Arrested in</i>	<i>Reasons of Arrest</i>	<i>period of Imprisonment</i>
1	2	3
1930	For conducting the Civil Disobedience movement in Patna District	7 and 1/2 months rigorous imprisonment in Patna Distt. jail, Patna Camp jail. Sentences by SDO Barh Sub-Division. He was released in March, 1931 during Gandhi-Irwin-Pact
1932	In a raid on a secret Patna office	56 days in Patna City Opium Godown Camp Jail
1932	For picketing liquor and ganja shops at Digha Ghat, Patna	9 months rigorous imprisonment

(Contd.)

1	2	3
1933	Under Criminal Law and Amendment Act	15 months in Patna Camp jail (but released at the time of earth-quake which rocked Bihar in February 1934)
1940	Under the Defence of India Rules (Arrested in Patna)	2 and 1/2 years, sentenced by Chhapra Court
1942	For conducting the 1942 Quit India Movement and for INA Movement	1 year. He was arrested in Lamington Road, Bombay when he was under-ground
1944	He was arrested, when he went underground and was subjected to severe torture	Till the end of IInd World War (kept as a security prisoner)
1947	He was involved in highest espionage a part of Netaji's plans to conquer India with the Azad Hind Fauz	8 months (till 15-8-47) released at 9 P.M, on 15th August, 1947, on the eve of declaration of Indian Independence

He was Court Martialled twice for his contacts with Netaji and Azad Hind Fauz and revolt of Royal Indian Navy in Feb., 1946. In all, he was in jail for seven and half years. His weight was reduced from 125 pounds to 70 pounds in jail due to tortures.

THE BOSE-PATEL STATEMENT

The events of the last thirteen years have demonstrated that a political warfare based on the principle of maximum suffering for ourselves and minimum suffering for our opponents can not possibly lead to success. It is futile to expect that we can ever bring about a change of heart in our rulers merely through our own suffering or by trying to love them. And the latest action of Mahatma Gandhi in suspending the civil disobedience movement is a confession of failure as far as the present method of the Congress is concerned. We are clearly of opinion that as a political leader Mahatma Gandhi has failed. The time has therefore come for a radical reorganisation of the Congress on a new principle and with a new method. For bringing about this reorganisation a change of leadership is necessary, for it would be unfair to Mahatma Gandhi to expect him to evolve or work a programme and method not consistent with his life-long principles. If the Congress as a whole can undergo this transformation, it would be the best course. Failing that a new party will have to be formed within the Congress, composed of all radical elements. Non-co-operation cannot be given up but the form of Non-co-operation will have to be changed into a more militant one and the fight for freedom to be waged on all fronts.

V. J. PATEL

SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
Vienna, May 9, 1933

FORWARD BLOC—ITS JUSTIFICATION

[This thesis, written by Netaji during his secret sojourn in Kabul after his escape from India in January 1941, was one of three documents delivered personally to Sarat Chandra Bose in Calcutta by Shri Bhagat Ram Talwar, Netaji's escort from Peshawar to Kabul, on March 31, 1941.-Ed.]

The evolution of a Movement is analogous to that of a tree. It grows from within and at every stage it throws out new branches, so that there may be ever increasing progress. When no fresh branches sprout forth, the Movement may be presumed to be in a process of decay or death.

While every Movement draws its sustenance from the soil from which it springs, it also assimilates nourishment coming from outside—from the atmosphere, environment, etc. Internal sustenance and external nourishment are both necessary for a living Movement.

When the main stream of a movement begins to stagnate, but there is still vitality in the Movement as a whole—a Left Wing invariably appears. The main function of the Left Wing is to stimulate progress when there is danger of it being arrested. The appearance of a Left Wing is followed by a

conflict between it and the main stream, which now becomes the Right Wing. This conflict is a temporary phase and through it a higher stage is reached, when the conflict is resolved. The solution of the conflict takes place through some sort of agreement or adjustment, whereby the Left Wing begins to dominate the Movement as a whole. Thus the Left Wing becomes, in time, the main stream of the Movement.

One may describe this process of evolution in philosophical language by saying that the "Thesis" throws up its "Antithesis", and the conflict between the two is resolved in a "Synthesis". This "Synthesis", in its turn, becomes the "thesis" of the next stage of evolution.

This process of evolution — called the "dialectical process"—if properly comprehended, can give a new meaning and significance to the developments that have taken place within the Indian National Congress during the last few decades. We shall herein study the Gandhi Movement from the dialectical point of view.

We may observe at this stage that it would be an error to suppose that conflicts inside a Movement are unhealthy or undesirable under all circumstances. It would indeed be more correct to say that conflicts which arise from the logic of history are essential to progress, whether in the sphere of thought or in the sphere of action.

There is no fixed rule as to when a Movement or a particular phase of it should lose its dynamism and begin to stagnate. So long as it can assimilate from outside and go on creating something new, decay cannot set in.

To come now to a study of the Gandhi Movement. By 1919, after the close of the World War, a new situation arose in India and with it, new problems. The official Indian National Congress could not face this situation as it had lost its dynamism altogether, and a Left Wing was clearly necessary if the entire Congress was not to stagnate and die. At this juncture a Left Wing appeared in the form of the Gandhi Movement. Conflict ensued for a time and the old leaders

were driven out of the Congress or voluntarily withdrew. Ultimately, a "Synthesis" took place. The Congress accepted the tenets of Mahatma Gandhi and the Left Wing then became the official Congress.

In 1920, Gandhism took possession of the Indian National Congress and for two decades it has maintained its hold. This has been possible, not merely because of Mahatma Gandhi's personality but also because of his capacity to assimilate other ideas and policies. But for the latter factor, Gandhism would have ceased to dominate the Congress long ago. During its twenty years' domination of the Congress whenever revolts appeared, the Gandhi Movement took the wind out of their sails by accepting many of their ideas and policies—and only recently has it shown signs of failing to adapt itself to the changing environment. For instance, when the Swarajya Party arose in 1923, the conflict that followed continued only for a time. At the Cawnpore Congress in 1925, the Swarajist policy of carrying non-cooperation inside the Legislatures was accepted by the Gandhites and was thereupon adopted by the Congress as a whole.

Again in December, 1928, at the Calcutta Congress there was a revolt against Gandhism sponsored by the Independence League on the issue of Independence. Mahatma Gandhi then advocated Dominion Status and he fought and defeated our resolution on Independence. But a year later, at the Lahore Congress, he himself moved the resolution declaring that henceforth Independence was to be the goal of the Indian National Congress.

By this process of assimilation, the Gandhi movement was able to maintain its progressive character and prevent the emergence of any big Left Wing development. There was a temporary setback after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in March, 1931, but Gandhiji recovered lost ground when he launched Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience in January, 1932.

The failure of this Civil Disobedience Movement and its abandonment in May 1933, created a new situation which gave birth to a fresh revolt — this time from the Right. Disappointed at the failure of the Movement, a large section of

Gandhiites urged the revival of the parliamentary programme which had been scrapped by them at the Lahore Congress in December, 1929, before the launching of Satyagraha by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930. Gandhiji surrendered to this demand in 1934, ostensibly because he had no alternative plan for the Congress. This incident was an indication that stagnation in the Gandhi Movement had set in and this was confirmed when a big Left Wing revolt arose through the medium of the Congress Socialist Party which was inaugurated in 1934, almost contemporaneously with the swing towards parliamentarianism.

The Gandhi movement did not lose its elasticity and adaptability in a day and the attitude of the Gandhiites towards the Congress Socialists and other Leftists remained benevolent on the whole in 1934 and after. As a matter of fact, the Congress Socialists were offered seats on the Congress Working Committee in 1936, 1937 and 1938. (They did not accept the offer in 1938). In January, 1938, the Gandhiites, at the instance of Mahatma Gandhi himself, supported my candidature for the Congress Presidentship. And at the Haripura Congress in February, 1938, when I was to nominate the Working Committee for the year, Gandhiji was clearly of opinion that there could be no objection to having Socialists on the Working Committee.

A distinct — and what has still remained inexplicable — change in Mahatma Gandhi's attitude came in September 1938, after a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi, at which there was a walk-out of the Left Wingers over a controversial issue. It was then that one heard Gandhiji saying that there could be no compromise with the Leftists in conducting the affairs of the Congress. A few months later, in January, 1939, he gave proof of the same mentality by opposing my re-election as Congress President.

Since September 1938, Gandhism has tended to become increasingly static and hide-bound. At the Haripura Congress in February of the same year, the two most important resolutions passed were on the questions of Federation and

the coming War. Though the resolution on Federation was one of uncompromising opposition throughout that year the air was thick with rumours that negotiations for a compromise between the Gandhiites and British Government were going on behind the scenes. My attitude of uncompromising hostility towards Federation was the first item in the Gandhian charge-sheet against my Presidentship. The second item was what the Gandhiites regarded as my unduly friendly attitude towards the Leftists. The third item in the charge-sheet was my sponsoring and subsequent inauguration of the National Planning Committee which, in the view of the Gandhiites, would give a fillip to large-scale production at the sacrifice of village industries, the revival of which was a very important item in the Gandhian constructive programme. The next charge against me was that I advocated an early resumption of the National struggle for Independence, to be preceded by an ultimatum to the British Government.

By September, 1938, any intelligent person could have foreseen that in future the relations between the Gandhiites and the Leftists would cease to be cordial. As already indicated above, Gandhiji himself gave a frank expression to the change in his mentality. Furthermore, it became clear to esoteric circles in the Congress at the time of the Munich Pact that in the event of a War-crisis overtaking India in the future—an open rupture between the Gandhiites and the Leftists would become unavoidable. It is true that from 1927 (Madras Congress) to 1938—War policy of the Congress was clearly enunciated in successive annual sessions of the Congress and one would not under ordinary circumstances have expected any divergence of opinion, not to speak of a rupture, among Congressmen on the war issue. Nevertheless, discussions among important Congress leaders during the international crisis preceding the Munich Pact left no room for doubt that the Gandhiites cherished no enthusiasm for the war-resolutions passed by preceding sessions of the Congress and they would not hesitate to circumvent them should they find it necessary or convenient to do so. Now the two questions on which the Leftists

were tremendously keen and on which they would not countenance any compromise were those of Federation and the coming War. Consequently, the vacillating and compromising attitude of the Gandhiites on these two issues presaged a breach between them and the Leftists in the days to come.

Though the Munich Pact staved off the war in Europe for the time being, students of International Politics could not but feel that the War was nevertheless unavoidable and imminent. The conviction began thereafter to grow within me that in view of the international situation, the British Government would give up the idea of forcing Federation down the throats of the Indian people. Federation being no longer a live issue for the Indians, it was necessary for them to decide about their future political plans. Since the much-expected battle royal on the Federation issue was off, how were they to continue the fight for Independence?

In November, 1938, when I began my North India tour, I put forward a solution of this problem. I urged that it was no use waiting for the Government to take the initiative against the Indian people. Federation being dead, at least for the time being, and war being ahead of us in the not-distant future, it was time for the Congress to take the initiative. The proper method for doing so would be to send an ultimatum to British Government demanding Independence within a certain period and start preparing the country for a national struggle. This idea was widely propagated by us from November onwards and it came before the Tripuri Congress in March, 1939, in the form of a resolution—but it was defeated at the instance of the Gandhiites. That resolution stated, *inter alia*, that after the ultimatum was sent to the British Government, a period of six months would be given within which a definite reply was called for. Six months after the Tripuri Congress when war broke out in Europe, the political wisdom underlying our resolution was admitted even by the Gandhiites who were so much against us at Tripuri.

Soon after War declared in Europe, Mahatma Gandhi who was then the unofficial Dictator of the Congress, issued a public statement advocating unconditional co-operation with Great Britain in the prosecution of the War. The resolutions repeatedly passed by the Congress during a period of eleven years were conveniently forgotten. (Federation was officially postponed by the Government after the War broke out).

Since 1938, the issues on which we Leftists have found ourselves at loggerheads with the Gandhians and on which no compromise has been possible—are the resumption of the national struggle for Independence and the correct war-policy of the Indian people. It is to be noted that till November, 1940, Mahatma Gandhi consistently declared in private and in public, that any satyagraha or civil disobedience was out of the question and that anybody who launched such a movement would be doing harm to his country. It is true that in November, 1940, Individual Satyagraha was started under his auspices. But as Gandhiji himself has declared and as we all know very well, it is not a mass struggle for the attainment of Independence. As responsible British officials in India and in England have already declared, this movement has not embarrassed the British Government to any appreciable degree. In conformity with his desire that Great Britain should win the War, Mahatma Gandhi has refrained from creating an embarrassing situation for the Government which a mass struggle for winning Independence would naturally have done.

In September, 1939, Mahatma Gandhi advocated unconditional co-operation with Great Britain in the prosecution of the War, but in November, 1940, he demanded liberty to carry on anti-war propaganda. Since 1938, he consistently denounced all attempts to resume the national struggle for independence, but in November, 1940, he modified that stand so far as to actually launch the Individual Civil Disobedience Movement. Would it not be a moot question to ask as to what could explain this change however small? And would it be wrong to say that this change has been due entirely to the pressure from the left?

That Gandhiji could, even at his present age, alter a position consistently and tenaciously advocated and upheld by him for a fairly long period—though this change may be due to pressure and be only partial—is evidence of his adaptability and mobility. Nevertheless it is not adequate for the needs of the times. We are now living in the “Blitzkrieg” period of history and if we do not move with the times, we shall have to go under. So far, Gandhiji has been unable to prove by his action that he can keep abreast of the times and lead his nation—and this accords with our belief which we have already stated that the Gandhi Movement is becoming static and hide-bound.

The uncompromising attitude towards heterodox thought which the Gandhiites have been evincing since September, 1938, and their increasing desire and endeavour to expel dynamic and radical elements from the Congress—not only prove that they are losing their adaptability and mobility but will, like a vicious circle, make them more and more static. The various non-political organizations which Gandhiji has started for the Gandhiites (e.g. the All-India Spinners Association; the Gandhi Seva Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the All-India Village Industries Association, the Hindi Prachar Samiti, etc.) will also undermine the political dynamism of the Gandhi Movement in future by creating non-political vested interests, as it has already been doing. And more than anything else, peaceful parliamentary life and ministerial office has been, and will be, the political grave of Gandhism,

Whatever revolutionary fervour the Gandhi Movement had, was sapped more by the acceptance of ministerial office than by any other factor. It would be no exaggeration to say that under the influence of the factor, a large number of Congressmen have definitely turned from the thorny path of Revolution to the rosy path of Constitutionalism. Congress Ministries in the provinces were formed in 1937 and neo-Constitutionalism reared its head in a menacing form within the Congress in 1938. Ever since then, the main task of Leftism has been to fight this “Frankenstein” created

by the Congress itself. How to stem this drift towards Constitutionalism, how to create afresh a revolutionary mentality among the people in place of the neo-constitutionalist mentality, how to face the war-crisis in a bold and adequate manner, how to bring the Congress back to the path of uncompromising National Struggle and how ultimately to establish Leftist ascendancy in the Congress—these have been the main problems for the Leftists since 1938.

The Gandhi Movement today has become a victim of not only Constitutionalism but also of Authoritarianism. A certain amount of Authoritarianism is permissible and natural in a militant organization. But the excessive Authoritarianism that one finds today is traceable to the same cause as Constitutionalism. Since the acceptance of Ministerial office, the Gandhiites have had a taste of power and they are anxious to monopolise it for themselves in future. What has been going on within the Congress of late, is "power politics", though of a sham kind. The fountainhead of this "power politics" is Wardha. It is the aim of this "power-politics" to beat down all opposition within the Congress so that the Gandhiites may comfortably rule the roost for all time. But this game will not succeed. Real power has yet to come and it will never come if we travel along the safe path of Constitutionalism. It is certainly possible for the Gandhiites to expel all discordant elements from the Congress and make it a close preserve. But that does not mean that they will be able to win liberty for India. And without real power, there can not be real "power-politics". What we see therefore today is sham "power-politics".

Personally I would have no objection to the Gandhiites trying to monopolise power for themselves acting in an authoritarian manner, if they had been a revolutionary force. But unfortunately, Gandhism has ceased to be revolutionary. There is no hope that it will succeed in carrying the nation towards its goal of national Independence. Consequently, the more our Gandhiite friends try to consolidate their power, position and influence, the more stagnation they

will bring into the Congress. Liberal doses of disciplinary action against non-conformists may make the Congress a more homogeneous body than at present, but that process will only create more enemies outside and in the end will strike at the "mass-basis" of the Congress and undermine the hold which the Congress has over the country at large.

The efforts of the Gandhiites to consolidate themselves is nothing else than "Right-consolidation" within the Congress. This had gone on slowly for a long time and unnoticed, till it was accentuated with the acceptance of Ministerial office. When the danger was detected and the Leftists began to organise in self-defence, a furore arose in Gandhian circles. For the latter, self-consolidation, i.e. right and natural; but Left-consolidation was a crime.

Ever since Gandhism has begun to stagnate and a big Left Wing has emerged in opposition to it, the Gandhiites have become Rightists and Gandhian consolidation has come to mean Right-consolidation.

Philosophically speaking, Right-consolidation is the "thesis" which demands its "anti-thesis" in Left-consolidation. Without this "anti-thesis" and the conflict following in its wake, no further progress is possible. All those who believe in progress and desire it, should therefore actively assist in this task of Left-consolidation and should be prepared for the conflict resulting therefrom. For bringing about Left-consolidation, the Forward Bloc was born in May, 1939, soon after a momentous Session of the All-India Congress Committee in Calcutta, at which I tendered my resignation of the office of President.

Left-consolidation could have been achieved in either of the following ways :

- (i) By forming one party and rallying all the Leftist elements therein. This, however, was not possible because several parties, claiming to be Leftists, already existed, and they were not prepared to liquidate themselves in favour of one party.

- (ii) By organizing a new Bloc which all Leftists and existing Leftist parties would join, while retaining the separate identity of their respective parties, if they so desired

This was the first aim and endeavour of the Forward Bloc when it was launched. It did not want to start rivalry with the existing Leftist parties, nor did it want to undermine any of them. If the Bloc's proposal had been accepted and all Leftist parties had joined the Forward Bloc, while retaining their separate identity—Left consolidation would have been easily and promptly achieved and the Rightists would have been faced with a formidable force. But unfortunately for the Leftist cause, this also was not possible, because some of the existing Leftist parties prohibited their members from joining the newly formed Forward Bloc. What accounted for this inexplicable attitude on the part of these parties, need not be discussed here.

- (iii) In the above circumstances, fresh attempt at Left-consolidation was made in the following manner. The existing Leftist parties and the Forward Bloc agreed among themselves to form a new Committee to be called the Left consolidation Committee. This committee was to function as the organ of the entire left—But it would act only when there was unanimity among the component elements of the Left-consolidation Committee.

The Left-consolidation Committee was formed in Bombay in June, 1939, and the effect was immediate and striking. For the first time, the entire Left presented a united and organised front at the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee which was being held at the time. Though numerically in a minority, the Leftists were thereby able to prevent several changes being enacted in the Congress constitution, on which the Rightists were known to be very keen. That meeting of the All India Congress Committee was

a moral victory for the Leftists and on the surface, it seemed to augur well for the Leftist cause.

But on the 9th July, 1939 the first blow at the Left-consolidation Committee was struck and by M.N. Roy. The Committee had decided to observe the 9th July as an All-India day for protesting against two resolutions of an anti-Left character which had been passed by the All-India Congress Committee at its Bombay meeting in June in the teeth of Leftist opposition. The Congress President, Babu Rajendra Prasad, issued a statement in July calling upon Leftists to abandon the All-India Day on pain of disciplinary action. As a result of this threat, M. N. Roy made an announcement at the eleventh hour to the effect that his party, the Radical League, would not participate in the observance of the All-India Day. He also telegraphed to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru requesting him to use his influence with the Congress Socialist Party and dissuade them from participating in the All-India Day. Since M.N. Roy was then looked upon as a Leftist leader and his Radical League was one of the component units of the Left-consolidation Committee, his action amounted to a betrayal of the Leftist cause and was warmly acclaimed by the Rightists.

Though handicapped by the defection of the Radical League, the other members of the Committee carried on as usual, and their determination to hold together increased when the War Situation overtook the country in September, 1939. But in October, a new crisis appeared when the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party announced in Lucknow that in future their Party would act on its own and would not follow the direction of the Left-consolidation Committee. Nevertheless, consultations between them and other members of the Committee continued for a time.

The next blow struck at the Left-consolidation Committee was in December, 1939, when a breach between the Forward Bloc and the National Front took place. The relations between the two had hitherto remained close and cordial. For instance, when the Anti Imperialist Conference was held at Nagpur in October, on the eve of the meeting of the Congress Working Committee at Wardha, the National Front

enthusiastically participated in it, along with the Forward Bloc, Kisan Sabha and others, though the Congress Socialists from other provinces outside C.P. and Berar did not. And after the Congress Socialists withdrew from the L.C.C. later in October at Lucknow the Forward Bloc and National Front continued to collaborate. It was, however, brought to the notice of the Forward Bloc that the National Front had been carrying on propaganda against the former, while outwardly collaborating on the left-consolidation Committee. What is more, it appeared that in an official journal of the National Front, an official article had appeared painting the Forward Bloc as a counter revolutionary organization and adversely criticising it in many ways. This matter was brought up at a meeting of the leaders of the Bloc and of the National Front held in Calcutta in December, 1939. The latter refused to disown the above article or to withdraw it. Thereupon they were told by the Forward Bloc leaders that a "counter-revolutionary" organization could not collaborate with the National Front on the Left-consolidation Committee.

The attitude of the National Front leaders showed that they wanted to use the platform of the L.C.C. for popularising their organization, while carrying on reprehensible propaganda, both secret and open, against the component unit of the Committee.

When the breach took place at Calcutta in December, 1939, the National Front openly informed the Forward Bloc that if a national struggle was launched by the latter independently of the Congress, the former would openly denounce it and resist it.

This breach was further accentuated by a conflict between the Bengal Branch of the Forward Bloc and of the National Front over some other issues.

Even before the Left-consolidation Committee was started there was in operation something like a L.C.C. in Bengal. As a result, the Leftists were in an overwhelming majority in the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, the dominant partner in the Leftist Combination being those who later on joined

the Forward Bloc when it was formed. The Leftist Combination naturally became stronger when the Left-consolidation Committee was started on an All-India basis.

After the 9th July, 1939, disciplinary action was taken against the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (i.e. myself) by the Congress Working Committee for participating in the All-India Day. This was resented by all the Leftists in the B.P.C.C. including the National Front and a united protest was made by them. It soon became apparent that the above action of the Working committee was but the beginning of a long chain of unwarranted interference and persecution on the part of that Committee. All the Leftists in the B.P.C.C. then resolved not to submit meekly to the Working Committee but to continue their protest. After a few months, it became evident that the working Committee was determined to go to any length, including the suspension of the valid B.P.C.C., and the setting up of an Ad hoc Committee instead. At this stage the National Fronters in the B.P.C.C. began to show signs of weakness as well as reluctance to continue their attitude of protest against the high-handed action of the Working Committee. This was regarded by other Leftists as something like an act of betrayal in the midst of a grim fight and it looked as if the National Fronters were frightened at the prospect of disciplinary action. But the National Fronters wanted to cloak their real motive and they tried to sidetrack the issue by saying that instead of engaging in an organizational conflict with the Working Committee, the B.P.C.C. as a Leftist body should launch a struggle against the Government on the issue of Civil Liberty. The other Leftists were quite prepared to do this, but they wanted to continue their organizational protest against the Working Committee simultaneously. Ultimately, after a period of tension, an agreement was arrived at between the National Fronters and all the other Leftists in January, 1940, whereby the B.P.C.C. was to launch a struggle on the issue of Civil Liberty and the National Fronters were to join the other Leftists in continuing the protest against the Working Committee. Towards the end of January, 1940, the B.P.C.C.

launched the movement as agreed upon and public meetings began to be held in defiance of the official ban. But after some time it was noticed that when the National Fronters held any public meeting, they did so after obtaining the permission of the authorities. In July, 1940, when the B.P.C.C. launched the Holwel Monument Satyagraha, not only did the National Fronters not join it—but some of them actually opposed it. Furthermore, after the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh in March, 1940, when the Forward Bloc announced the launching of a nation-wide struggle, the National Fronters did their best to resist that move as well.

So much about participating in a struggle. With regard also to joining in the protest against the Congress High Command, the National Fronters did not fulfil their part of the agreement and they began to drop off. When the Working Committee in an unwarranted and illegal manner suspended the valid B.P.C.C. which had been dominated by the Leftists and set up an Ad Hoc Committee instead, the National Fronters quietly parted company with the Leftists. The latter decided to ignore the fiat of the High Command and the valid B.P.C.C. continued to function. The National Fronters at first made a show of neutrality by declaring that they would not join either side. A little later, however, they began to apply to the Ad hoc Committee for the recognition of their membership. Today they have cast off all sense of shame and openly declare that they cannot sever their connection with the Congress Working Committee.

The behaviour of the National Fronters in Bengal towards the Forward Bloc and other Leftists there, had repercussions in the All-India field and served to widen the breach between the two organizations which took place at Calcutta in December, 1939, on All-India issues.

After the events of December, 1939, all that remained of the Left-consolidation Committee was the Forward Bloc and the Kisan Sabha. Their collaboration became closer and closer with the passage of time. It was owing to their cooperation and initiative that the All-India Anti-Compromise

Conference was held at Ramgarh, in March, 1940, contemporaneously with the annual session of the Congress and proved to be such a remarkable success.

The question may very well be raised as to why the Forward Bloc was at all started and why the existing Leftist parties were not charged with the responsibility of bringing about Left-consolidation. The experiment was in fact tried but it failed and then there arose a situation in which it became imperative to start the Forward Bloc, if the Leftists were to be rallied under one banner and the menace of Right-consolidation was to be countered.

With the formation of the Congress Socialist Party, Radical League and similar organizations in 1934 and after, and the decision of the National Front to join the Congress—the Leftists in the Congress began to gain appreciably in influence and in numbers. This continued till 1937 but in 1938 the process suffered a check and it was quite noticeable at the Haripura Congress in February, 1938. After Haripura, Leftists belonging to different parties began to put their heads together with a view to devising ways and means for increasing the Leftist strength. These efforts continued from February, 1938 to April, 1939. The proposal then was to form a Left Bloc and the Congress Socialist Party and the National Front were requested to take the lead in organising it. I took an active part in these efforts and many individuals like myself who had not till then joined any of the existing parties—pledged their support to the Leftist Bloc. Both the C.S.P. and the National Front at first took the idea of the Left Bloc with great enthusiasm, but they ultimately gave it up. Why they did so, remains a mystery to me up to the present day. Perhaps they thought that if the Left Bloc was organised and if it began to flourish—the importance of their respective parties would wane. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that if the Left Bloc had been launched in time, it would have taken the place of the Forward Bloc. The failure to start the Left Bloc belonged primarily to the C.S.P. and the N.F.

Now why did the existing parties fail to serve the Leftist cause adequately and why was a new organization necessary?

The answer evidently is that for some reason or other they failed to rally all those who should and could have been brought into the Leftist fold. Perhaps they were too keen on propagating Socialism—a thing of the future—whereas the immediate task was the widening and strengthening of the anti-imperialist front and an intensification of the anti-imperialist struggle. There was a large number of Congressmen who viewed with dismay the growth of Right-consolidation and the consequent drift towards Constitutionalism, following the acceptance of ministerial office in the provinces. They were naturally more interested in widening and strengthening the anti-imperialist front than in any thing else. It was with the help of these men that we could hope to resist the onslaught from the Right and establish Leftist ascendancy in the Congress. It had therefore been decided that the programme of the Left Bloc would be a minimum anti-imperialist programme, on the basis of which we could hope to rally all genuine anti-imperialists under one banner and give battle to the Rightists.

This was also our idea at the time we launched the Forward Bloc. Our immediate task was to fight the increasing drift towards Constitutionalism, reconvert the Congress into a revolutionary organization and bring it back to the path of national struggle and prepare the country for the coming War crisis.

Since its birth, the Forward Bloc has developed greatly, along with changes in the Indian political scene. But it has failed to bring other parties together on one platform, as originally intended. Does that mean that there is no hope of Left-consolidation? No. It only means that Left-consolidation will be achieved by some other means.

A word is necessary here as to what exactly is meant by Leftism. When different individuals and organizations claim to be Leftists, how are we to decide who are—and who are genuine Leftists?

In the present political phase of Indian life, Leftism means anti-Imperialism. A genuine anti-imperialist is one who believes in undiluted independence (not Mahatma

Gandhi's substance of independence) as the political objective and in uncompromising national struggle as the means for attaining it. After the attainment of political independence Leftism will mean Socialism and the task before the people will then be the reconstruction of national life on a Socialist basis. Socialism or Socialist reconstruction before achieving our political emancipation is altogether premature.

Genuine anti-imperialists, i.e. Leftists have always to fight on two fronts. So also in India, they have to fight on one side, foreign Imperialism and its Indian allies, and on the other, our milk-and-water nationalists, The Rightists, who are prepared for a deal with Imperialism. Genuine anti-Imperialists should therefore anticipate persecution not only at the hands of the known agents of alien Imperialism but also at the hands of their Rightist friends—and at times it may be difficult to say which persecution is more severe and trying. In the case of present-day India, the Rightists will stoop to any degree of ruthlessness in the persecution of the Leftists, because they have had a taste of power and are determined to monopolise it for themselves in future by rooting out all opposition.

To carry on a struggle on two fronts simultaneously and to face the above two-fold persecution is not an easy affair. There are people who may stand up to one type of persecution at a time, but not to both. There are others who can stomach persecution at the hands of an alien Government, but who quail when it comes to a question of fighting their Rightist friends. But if we are genuine anti-imperialists and want to function as such, we must muster courage to fight on a double-front and face all the persecution that may come our way,

In India we often come across people who pose as Leftists and talk big things, including Socialism—but who manage to shirk a struggle when they are confronted with it and spin out ingenious arguments for buttressing themselves. Thus we see pseudo-Leftists who through sheer cowardice avoid a conflict with Imperialism and argue in self-defence that

Mr. Winston Churchill (whom we know to be the arch-Imperialist) is the greatest revolutionary going. It has become a fashion with these pseudo-Leftists to call the British Government a revolutionary force because it is fighting the Nazis and Fascists. But they conveniently forget the imperialist character of Britain's war and also the fact that the greatest revolutionary force in the world, the Soviet Union, has entered into a solemn pact with the Nazi Government.

Those who are prepared to face Imperialism but shrink from a clash with the Rightists, take shelter under a different argument. They hide their weakness under the plea of unity. But this is a specious plea which often results in self-deception. One should always distinguish between unity and unity—between the unity of action and the unity of inaction. And one should never forget that to talk of unity between those who are genuine anti-imperialists and those who are not—is mere moonshine. If unity under all circumstances is an end in itself, then why not establish unity between Congressmen and those who are outside the Congress or are against it? The argument of unity should not be carried beyond a certain point. Unity is certainly desirable, but only when there is agreement in principle and in policy. Unity of the sacrifice of one's principles or convictions is worthless and leads to inaction, while real unity is always a source of strength and stimulates activity. To avoid a clash with the Rightists by putting forward the plea of unity is nothing but weakness and cowardice.

In the light of these observations it should be easy to decide who are, and who are not, genuine Leftists and as to whether the Forward Bloc has proved by its action and conduct to be a genuine Leftist organisation.

The question now is as to how Left-consolidation will ultimately be brought about. We have seen that three possible methods for achieving Left-consolidation have all failed. We also know that different individuals and parties have claimed to be Leftist. How then will the Left Movement develop in future?

The answer to this question is that the logic of history will determine who are the genuine Leftists. History will separate the chaff from the grain—the pseudo-Leftists from the genuine Leftists. When this elimination takes place, all the genuine Leftists will come together and fusion will take place. By this natural or historical process, Left-consolidation will be achieved. For this purpose, the acid-test of a fight on a double front is essential. Those who pass the test will be the genuine Leftists and they will all coalesce in time.

Since the Indians are a living nation, their political movement cannot die. And since stagnation has overtaken the Rightists, the logic of history demands a big Left Movement so that progress may continue. Conflict is bound to follow, but only for a time. Ultimately, Leftism will establish its supremacy over the entire political Movement of the land.

Since its inception, the Forward Bloc has been functioning as the spearhead of the Left Movement in India. Through everyday and along with its ally, The Kisan Sabha; it will be largely responsible for bringing about Left-consolidation in future. By waging a fearless fight on a double-front and by welcoming simultaneous persecution at the hands of alien Imperialism and of the Indian Rightists it has established its claim to be a genuine Leftist organization. It has therefore succeeded where other parties have failed.

The Forward Bloc is to the Left Movement what the Gandhites are to the Right Movement. Philosophically speaking, the former may be regarded as the “anti-thesis” of the latter. Though the Forward Bloc has always desired to work in close cooperation with the Gandhites on the anti-imperialist front, the differences between the two are deep and fundamental. Gandhism envisages an ultimate compromise with Imperialism for Gandhian Satyagraha (or Civil Disobedience) must end in a compromise. But Forward Bloc will have no truck with Imperialism. Socially, Gandhism is intimately linked up with the “haves”—the vested interests. As the “have-nots” are becoming class-conscious, as is inevitable, the breach between them and the Gandhites is widening.

One therefore finds that unlike what was the position twenty years ago, today Gandhism does not appeal to large masses of the peasantry and factory workers, nor does it appeal to middle class youths and students, the vast majority of whom sympathise with the poverty-stricken masses. With regard to the future Gandhian idea of post struggle reconstruction which are partly medieval and partly anti-socialist are contrary to those of the Forward Bloc which has a thoroughly modern outlook and stands for Socialist Reconstruction.

Since its inauguration in May, 1939, the Forward Bloc has developed in its ideology and programme—and naturally too—but there has been no change in fundamentals, except that at the Second All-India Conference held at Nagpur in June, 1940, it was declared to be a party. Today, as it did yesterday, it stands for uncompromising national struggle for the attainment of Independence, and for the post-struggle period, it stands for socialist reconstruction.

It would not be irrelevant to ask as to what the Forward Bloc has achieved so far and what potentiality it has for the future. Without indulging in exaggeration or in self-praise, we may make the following claim :

- (1) It has saved the Congress from stagnation and death at the hands of the Rightists by building up a Leftist force. It has thereby fulfilled its historical role to a large extent.
- (2) It has served to stem the drift towards Constitutionalism, to create a new revolutionary mentality among the people and to bring the Congress back to the path of struggle, however, inadequately. Today nobody will gainsay the fact that but for the Anti-compromise Conference held at Ramgarh in March, 1940, the Forward Bloc propaganda preceding it and the activities of the Bloc following it—Mahatma Gandhi would not have felt obliged to start the campaign of individual Civil Disobedience.
- (3) The analysis and the forecast of the War made by the Forward Bloc have been proved to be correct.

- (4) The propaganda and activities of the Forward Bloc have been responsible for inducing the Congress and Mahatma Gandhi to give the go-by to the original stand of the latter in September, 1939, with reference to the War and to return to the war-policy advocated by the Congress from 1927 to 1938.
- (5) In building up the Left Movement, the Forward Bloc has clarified the issues which separate the Left from Right and has stimulated the intellectual and ideological progress of the Congress.
- (6) The Forward Bloc has been functioning as a watchdog for warning the Congress and the country against any back-sliding on the part of any individual or party—particularly with reference to the major issues of the war-crisis and national struggle.

With reference to the future it may be confidently asserted :

- (1) That the Forward Bloc will in the fulness of time succeed in establishing Leftist ascendancy in the Congress so that the future progress of the latter may continue unhampered.
- (2) It will prove to be the party of the future—the party that will give the proper lead in bringing the national movement to its fruition and will thereafter undertake the task of national reconstruction. Having sprung from the soil of India as a product of historical necessity and having at the same time the capacity to assimilate what is healthy and beneficial in the environment and in the world outside, it will be able to fulfil the dual role of conducting the National Struggle to its cherished goal and of building up a new India on the principles of liberty, equality and social justice.
- (3) It will, by fulfilling its proper role, restore India to her proper and legitimate place in the comity of free nations.

- (4) It will thereby enable India to play her historical role so that human progress may be taken a few stages beyond the point it has so far reached.

The ideas that are now uppermost in the minds of the members of the Forward Bloc at the present time may be summarised as follows :

The Forward Bloc stands for :

- (1) Complete National Independence and uncompromising anti-imperialist struggle for attaining it.
- (2) A thoroughly modern and Socialist State.
- (3) Scientific large-scale production for the economic regeneration of the country.
- (4) Social ownership and control of both production and distribution.
- (5) Freedom for the individual in the matter of religious worship.
- (6) Equal rights for every individual.
- (7) Linguistic and cultural autonomy for all sections of the Indian Community.
- (8) Application of the principles of equality and social justice in building up the New Order in Free India.

The Forward Bloc is a revolutionary and dynamic organization. As such it does not swear by copy-book maxims or by text-books of Politics or Economics. It is anxious to assimilate all the knowledge that the outside world can give and to profit by the experience of other progressive nations. It regards progress or evolution as an eternal progress to which India also has a contribution to make.

Regarding the future career of the Forward Bloc we may confidently say that if it is the product of historical necessity, it will not die. If it has a philosophical justification, it will surely endure. And if it serves the cause of India, of humanity and of human progress, it will live and grow and no power on earth will ever destroy it.

Forward, therefore, and ever forward, my countrymen !

NETAJI'S SECRET MESSAGE TO COMRADES IN INDIA

[On May 20, 1941. Netaji sent this message from Berlin telegraphically to 'Rahamat Khan' through the Italian Legation in Kabul this was among the documents collected by Sarat Chandra Bose during his visit to Europe in 1948-49—Ed.]

“Big events will happen soon in sphere of international politics which will help the overthrow of British Imperialism. Time is therefore ripe for widespread propaganda and activity against Britain throughout the world and particularly in Oriental countries. To this work Indian can contribute much but they must speak and act in the name of Free India. I am expecting from the Axis Powers within a fortnight an open declaration regarding Indian Independence. Immediately after this declaration I intend starting propaganda and activity, including radio propaganda, in name of Free India Movement. I expect Axis declaration to say that the constitution of the Free Indian State will be decided by the Indian people themselves. My propaganda also will avoid party questions and simply appeal to the Indian people to fight for their liberty and take the help of all friendly powers. In my opinion the good results that will follow from my open propaganda in India will far outweigh the bad results, if any.

If you have any serious objections to my starting open propaganda even after the Axis declaration regarding Indian Independence then please return to India, consult friends and come back to Kabul and report to me. It is particularly necessary to consult Sarat Bose in Calcutta on this point. If however you agree that I should start propaganda after the Axis Declaration then let me know at once.

Please let me know names of important men you met in India. Have you delivered to Sarat Bose the personal letters and the long article ? Has the party published my statement on why I left India which I sent with you ? Did you meet the Moulana at Adda Sahib and will he actively help us ? When you go to India next time please arrange that emissaries are sent to our party members in Central and South India including Bombay so that they may be instructed to work in line with the rest of India.

It is absolutely necessary that Sardul Singh Cavesheer believes that you are acting as my agent. You can easily convince him through Calcutta friends or through Akbar Shah. Please request Sardul Singh to keep up friendly contacts with Ahrar Party and Jamiat Ulema and Akali Party. In spite of our ideological difference we must have friendly relations with Akalis. We need Sardul Singh to represent the public activity of Forward Bloc. Sarat Bose will be able to influence him properly.

Please organise a Nepalese group to work among Gurkha troops in India and also to go to Nepal for secret activity there. Calcutta friends could supply reliable Nepalese from Darjeeling. New German Commercial Attache will reach Kabul within a fortnight and he will give advice regarding Nepal where he had made contacts.

Please ask Calcutta friends to send out emissaries to Burma to make contact with Dobama and other revolutionary parties there and bring back correct information for me regarding the political situation there and possibility of revolution.

Please organise military espionage not only in Frontier and Punjab but in all military centres in India. Information

already collected should be brought to Kabul and preserve there in writing so that they may be used in future when necessary. Please collect detailed information regarding the composition of the troops in the Frontier according to religion and province and whether infantry or cavalry or artillery, etc.

Have you enquired if suitable land for aerodrome is available in Tribal Territory ? If not please do so at once. Please consider also how to bring petrol there and from where.

I intend having a centre in friendly Tribal Territory for special military training of Indians. Can you arrange necessary accommodation and good arrangements for this centre ? Can you also arrange for some European military officers to stay there ?

Have you attempted to organise a big Zirga (conference) of all anti-British Tribal leaders for organising an attack on the British on a large scale ?

Please arrange a relay of trusted messengers between Kabul and Peshawar and between Peshawar and Calcutta who will constantly come and go with information and instructions. For the first few months you should come personally to Kabul once a month. Please arrange your substitute for liaison work in case you are suddenly arrested. Have you arranged centres in Kabul where friends from India can stay ? Make such arrangements in Kabul that Europeans could be conveniently smuggled into the Tribal Territory from there. Arrange for car and lorry in Kabul for this purpose and also for other work in Kabul. We can begin sending help for India from June I am trying for Radio Transmitter for Tribal Territory. We can also send propaganda leaflets and booklets. Please arrange for these and sabotage materials and other articles to be taken to India from Kabul.

Do you want cyclostyle or Duplicator machines or small-printing presses for Tribal Territory or for India ?

What arms do you want for Tribal Territory and for India ? Have you enquired about quality and quantity of

arms produced in factories in Tribal Territory which can be purchased by us ?

Is radio propaganda from Berlin and Rome necessary in Pushtu language ?

Please bring from India report regarding reaction of the Indian people and particularly Indian Muslims to the Anglo-Iraq war.

If you have absolutely reliable men please put some into the new army that the British are trying to raise in India so that they may work within the army. Special care and caution will be necessary in selecting such men.

Will Uttam Chand do any serious work for us in future ?

Where is Sodhi now ? Please keep him for work in Tribal Territory,

Before you leave Kabul please send a detailed report of your last visit to Tribal Territory and India.

Please bring for me reports of the National Planning Committee and its Sub-Committees. You will get them from Bombay office.

Please send a plan of the work you propose to do in India and the Tribal Territory for working up a revolution and also the time-table if possible. What help do you want from here for that work ? If you cannot send me the plan now, please send it after consulting friends in India.

When you leave Kabul please visit Tribal Territory and important Indian centres and come back after one month.

Please take necessary money with you from Kabul but be economical in expenditure."

CALL FROM EAST ASIA*

*Berlin-Charlottenburg 2
Sophienstr. 6-7
22. May 1942.*

Your Excellency,

Your Excellency is aware of the rapid developments in the Far East which have brought the Japanese forces to the frontiers of India. These developments have had their repercussions on events inside India, where conditions are now ripe for a revolution. India has now the opportunity to overthrow the British yoke and win her liberty—an opportunity which is rare in history. I, therefore feel that I must make the fullest use of this unique opportunity.

Looking back upon my stay here for little more than a year, I think that I have done some useful and enduring work for my country. But now the time has come when the final effort should be made for achieving India's political emancipation. For this purpose, it is absolutely essential that I should be in the East. Only when I am there, shall I be able to direct the revolution along the right channels.

I am profoundly grateful to the German Government—and to your Excellency in particular—for the hospitality,

*Two letters to the German Government (1942)

assistance and kind consideration that I have received during my stay in Germany. This has served to forge the ties that will bind us together for all time. I am convinced more than ever before that the Tripartite Powers and India have a common destiny. Our common goal—the final defeat of Anglo-American Imperialism—demands that I should now go to the East and, from close quarters guide the Indian revolution towards that goal. Not only the cause of India, but our common cause as well, will be best served by my presence in the East, at a place, as near to India as possible.

During my absence from Europe, the organization which your Excellency has helped me to set up here, will continue to work in the closest collaboration with the German Government. And I shall, of course, remain in intimate contact with my organization here, as also with the German Government, through German Legations and German friends in the East,

It is now technically possible to travel to the East and both the German and Italian Governments are in a position to afford me the necessary facilities in this connection.

I am sure that Your Excellency as well as the Fuhrer, will appreciate this imperative and objective requirement of the revolutionary situation in India. I, therefore, confidently trust that Your Excellency will be good enough to provide me with the facilities necessary for travelling to the East, so that I may perform my duty towards my country, as a leader of the national revolution

Assuring Your Excellency of my warmest esteem and with profound thanks.

I am,
Yours respectfully,
Subhas Chandra Bose

(2)

The 5th Dec. 1942

Your Excellency.

I wanted to address Your Excellency immediately after my return from Rome. but I have been delayed owing to physical indisposition. Before I proceed to speak about my own plans and desires, I wish to say something about the situation in India.

I am glad to be able to report that in spite of the recent developments in Africa and in Western Europe, the situation in India has not, from our point of view, worsened in any way. Rather, the general mood is now more anti-British than before. The following factors account for the present situation in India.

(1) North Africa is too far from India—and military developments there do not have much effect on India.

(2) Field Marshall Rommel's present withdrawal still makes people hope that he will be in a position to take the offensive in Lybia again in future.

(3) Militarily, the most impressive and the most important thing for India is the success of the Japanese armed forces. So long as the Japanese Army stands on the frontier of India, any local, temporary setbacks which any of the Tripartite Powers may suffer in another theatre of war, cannot have any marked effect on India.

(4) The utterances of British Prime Minister and of other British politicians in recent weeks have further embittered the feelings of the Indian people.

(5) The removal of Sir Stafford Cripps from the War Cabinet and from the leadership of the House of Commons indicates more clearly to India that the policy of British Government in future is going to be a rank imperialistic one.

(6) Last but not the least, while present propaganda from London may have some influence in certain parts of Europe, it can have no influence on the Indian people. So much distrust in British propaganda has been engendered by us in India that we can rest assured that as long as the Indian leaders are in prison and British policy continues to be an imperialistic one, propaganda from London will fall on deaf ears.

The task of our own propaganda now is to further strengthen Indian distrust in all propaganda coming from Anglo-American sources. At the same time, we have to tell our countrymen that in case the position of the Anglo-Americans were to improve locally for a time in any part of the world—we have only to tighten our belts and work and fight even harder than before. The idea of a

common struggle against a common enemy based on a common strategy. has to be stressed more and more in future.

Viewed from the standpoint of a common world-strategy, it would appear that the importance of India in the common struggle against the Anglo-American powers has increased considerably. My presence in the Far East at this juncture has, in consequence, become more imperatively necessary than before. I could do much more for my country, if I could be somewhere near India. I could then help India to play a role in this war which would be of importance not only to India herself, but also to the common struggle against the common foe. India is a place where one could strike directly at England and indirectly at America. It is naturally a disappointment for me that at the eleventh hour, my journey to the Far East had to be abandoned, owing to reasons that were purely technical, though everything possible had been done from the side of German Government to help in the matter. Nevertheless, I remain an optimist and I have an intuitive feeling that a way will be found to make the journey possible.

I believe that it is technically possible for the German Government to help me travel to the Far East—either by aeroplane or by submarine or by ship. There is a certain amount of risk undoubtedly in this undertaking, but so is there in every undertaking. That risk I shall gladly and voluntarily take. At the same time, I believe in my destiny and I therefore believe that this endeavour will succeed. I would be profoundly grateful to Your Excellency and to the German Government for the necessary help in this matter—regardless of the difficulty or risk of inconvenience entailed thereby. And the sooner I could travel, the better it would be for India and for the common cause.

Assuring Your Excellency of my warmest esteem,

I am,
Yours respectfully.
Subhas Chandra Bose

NETAJI'S CONCEPT OF FREE INDIA

(Excerpts from a speech delivered by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in November 1944 to the students of the Tokyo Imperial University.)

In my travels abroad, I have often found that people generally have a wrong and sometimes a rather funny idea about my country. For instance, among the people in Europe, the general idea about India is that it is a land in which three things can be found : snakes, fakirs and maharajas. Among those who have been influenced by British propaganda, the general idea about India is that it is a country where people are always fighting among themselves, and where the strong hand of Britain is required in order to maintain peace and order among the people.

If you approach the Orientalists in Europe, that is, the experts in Indology you will find that they look upon India as a land of mystics and philosophers, a land which at one time produced a very rich philosophy but which is to-day as dead as the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Babylon are dead to-day.

What is India

Now the question is, "What is India in reality" No doubt we have a very ancient civilization, but unlike other

ancient civilizations, such as Egypt or Babylon, Phoenicia or even Greece, the ancient culture and civilization of India is not dead. It still lives in the present. And we Indians of to-day think the same thoughts, fundamentally the same thoughts, and have the same feelings, the same ideals of life, as our forefathers who lived 2,000 or 3,000 years ago. In other words, there is a continuity, historical and cultural continuity, extending from the ancient times till the present day which is in some ways a very remarkable thing in history. Now, in order to understand India this fundamental fact should first be understood namely, that the India of the past is not dead. India of the past lives in the present, and will live on in the future.

Against this background, this ancient background, we see changes in our national life from age to age. During the last 3,000 years, people have come into India from outside with new ideas, sometimes with new cultures. All these new influences, ideas and cultures have been gradually absorbed into the national life of India, so that in spite of the fact that fundamentally we have the same culture and civilization as we had several thousand years ago, we have nevertheless changed and moved with the times. To-day, in spite of our ancient background we are able to live in a modern world and adapt ourselves to that world.

Those who have been influenced, whether consciously, or unconsciously by British propaganda have the impression that India was very easily conquered by the British and also that after the British conquest of India our country was for the first time politically unified. Both these notions are entirely wrong and without foundation;

In the first place, it is not true that India was easily conquered by the British. It took the British 100 years, from 1757 to 1857 to finally subjugate India. Secondly, it is also an entirely wrong notion to think that India was politically unified by the British. The fact is that India was for the first time politically unified nearly 2,500 years ago under the Buddhist Emperor, Ashoka. In reality, the India of the time

of Ashoka the Great, was even larger than the India of today. Ashoka's India included not only modern India, but also Afghanistan and a part of Persia.

After the time of Ashoka, India has gone through many ups and downs in her national life. There have been periods of decay followed by periods of progress and national upheaval. But through these ups and downs in our national life we have been able, in the long run, to keep up our progress. About one thousand years after Ashoka, India again reached zenith of progress under the Gupta Emperors. This was followed by another glorious epoch in Indian history about nine hundred years later under the Moghul Emperors. Therefore, it is worth remembering that the British notion that we have been unified politically under British rule is entirely wrong. All that the British have tried to do during their regime in India is to divide the Indian people and to weaken, disarm and emasculate them.

Inner Vitality of a Nation

I shall now present before you a problem which will interest scientists and in particular, students of sociology. The question is whether the Indian people have any right to live as a free nation. In other words, have the strength and the vitality left in them to live and to develop themselves as a free nation? I personally hold the opinion that if a nation once loses its inner vitality then it has no right to exist. And even if it does continue to exist after losing its vitality, that existence will have hardly any worth or value for mankind. The only reason why I stand for India's freedom and believe that as a free nation we shall have a glorious future is that I believe that we have sufficient vitality left in us to live as free men and to develop as a nation.

Now, If I have to answer the question as to whether sufficient vitality is left in us, I shall have to answer two questions : firstly, has our nation any creative faculty and secondly, is it prepared to fight and to die in order to preserve its existence? These two tests have to be applied to India.

With regard to the first question, we have seen that in spite of the British in India, inspite of the innumerable restrictions and disadvantages which follows from foreign rule we have been able during the century to give numerous proofs that in different departments of our national life we still have creative power.

The number of philosophers and thinkers produced in India under British rule, the number of writers and poets that enslaved India has produced, the artistic revival in India in spite of British rule, the scientific progress made by the Indian people in spite of so many difficulties in the way of their education, the standard already attained by our leading scientists as compared with scientists in different parts of the world, the industrial progress made by India as the result of her own efforts and initiative and, last but not least, the distinction which we have attained in the field of sports, all these go to show that in spite of being politically subjugated the vitality of the nation has remained intact.

If under foreign rule and in spite of the obstacles and restrictions that follow from foreign rule, we could give so much proof of our creative faculty, then it stands to reason that when India is free and when the masses of the Indian people are afforded educational facilities, they will be able to give much better proof of their intellectual calibre and creative faculty in different walks of life.

I have just referred to the first test of a nation's vitality, namely, creative faculty. I shall now consider the second test, namely as to whether the Indian people are able to fight and to die for the sake of freedom. On this point I should like to say first of all, that, since the last great fight that they had with the British in 1857, the Indian people have not given up the struggle against the enemy even for one day.

Impetus to Freedom Movement

Unfortunately, owing to what I would call the folly of our forefathers, after our final defeat in 1857, the leaders in those days had allowed themselves to be disarmed. Whatever difficulty we have subsequently experienced in winning back our freedom has been due largely to our having been

disarmed. But though owing to the mistake of the leaders, the people were disarmed, nevertheless they continued to fight for their freedom in other ways.

I shall not take up your time unnecessarily by giving a description of all the methods that have been used in India against the British. I will only say this, that all the methods that have been tried by revolutionaries in different parts of the world for the achievement of their own independence have been tried in India.

At the beginning of this century, particularly after the victory of Japan over Russia in 1904 and 1905, the freedom movement in India got a new impetus and since then, during the last 40 years, our revolutionaries have been studying very closely the methods of revolutionaries in other countries and they have tried to adopt as many of their methods as possible.

They have tried also to manufacture secretly arms and explosives inside the country and to use those arms and explosives for the achievement of Independence. As a development of this struggle for freedom, India tried a new experiment, Civil-Disobedience, of which the best exponent was Mahatma Gandhi. Though personally I believe that this method will not succeed in bringing us complete independence, there is no doubt that it has greatly helped to rouse and unify the Indian people and also to keep up a movement of resistance against the foreign government. I should, therefore, say that the fact that in spite of all the struggle for freedom India tried a new experiment—Civil Disobedience of which the best exponent was Mahatma Gandhi. Difficulties that result from foreign rule, a nation can produce a new method and practice that method with a large measure of success is also a proof of that nation's vitality. It shows that a nation does not accept enslavement as a settled fact and is determined to struggle against it and to work out new methods for achieving independence.

Revolutionary Struggle

I have as a revolutionary, made a very close study of the revolutionary movement in other countries and I can say

without any exaggeration that since 1857 we have used every possible method of revolutionary struggle. In the course of this struggle, tremendous sacrifices have been made and many have given their lives. There was, however, one method that still remained for us to take up and that was the organisation of a real modern national army.

That work we had not done up till recently because it was impossible to do that inside India under the eyes of the British army and the British police. But the moment this war gave the Indian people an opportunity of organizing a modern Indian national army outside India they at once seized it.

So my point is that throughout our revolutionary struggle against the British Government and their armed forces we have shown sufficient initiative, creative power and vitality and have made tremendous sacrifices. We now hope that under the conditions, and with the advantages that this war has given us, we shall be able, after all, to fulfil our national aspirations and win freedom for India.

Having replied to the question regarding the vitality of the Indian people and their right to live as a free nation I shall now attempt a sociological analysis of modern India. If you are to understand modern India, you have to take note of three important factors. The first factor is the ancient background that is the ancient culture and civilization of India, of which Indian people of to-day are conscious, and of which they feel proud. The second factor is the struggle which has gone on without any break or interruption since we were finally overpowered by the British. And the third factor consists of certain influences which have come into India from outside.

Modern India is composed of this ancient background, the unbroken national struggle against Britain and the impact of influences from abroad.

I shall now deal, in some details, with the influences which have reacted on India from outside and which have been responsible, to some extent, in making modern India what it

is to-day. Among these outside influences the first factor is the influence of Western thought which was crystallized in Liberalism, Constitutionalism, and Democracy.

In other words, since 1857, modern, liberal and democratic thought has been influencing the intellectuals of India to a large extent.

From the beginning of the present century, a new factor came into operation. After the victory of Japan over Russia in 1904-1905, the eyes of the Indian people were opened to a new movement in Asia—the movement for the revival, not merely of Japan but alongwith Japan of other Asiatic countries. Since then, Indian thought has been greatly interested in Asiatic revival. During the last 40 years we have been thinking not merely what was happening inside India, but also of what was happening in other parts of Asia.

Foreign Revolutionary Influence

Another important factor which had influence on our mind consisted of the revolutionary struggle that have gone on in different parts of the world. Indian revolutionaries studied the Resorgimento Movement in Italy under the leadership of Mazzini and Garibaldi and the struggle of the Irish people against their British oppressors. In Russia, before the last World War, there was, as you know, a movement against the Czar called the Nihilist movement. That also was studied. And nearer India the new awakening in China under the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat Sen was also studied very closely and with great interest by Indian revolutionaries.

Thus, Indian revolutionaries have been exceedingly receptive to the influences exerted by revolutionary struggles abroad. Then during the last World War, when the revolution broke out in Russia and, as a result of it, a new Government came into existence, the work of that Government was studied with great interest in our country.

People in India have not been interested so much in the Communist movement as in the work of reconstruction in Soviet Russia—in the rapid industrialization of that country

and also in the way in which the Soviet Government solved the problem of minorities. It is this constructive achievement of the Soviet Government which was studied with great interest by people in our country. As a matter of fact, intellectuals like our poet Tagore, who had no interest in Communism as such were profoundly impressed when they visited Russia and saw the work of educational reconstruction in that country. Then there is another influence which came to India from outside in more recent times...I mean the new movement in Europe headed by Italy and Germany called Fascism or National Socialism. This movement was also studied by our revolutionaries.

I have just dealt with some of the influences that have reached India from different parts of the world, from England, France, Japan, China, Russia, Germany and so on. I will now take up another question, viz., as to how we have reacted to these influences.

Tagore & Gandhi

In dealing with this question of our reaction to these outside influences, I must first point out that there is a big gap between our generation and last generation. As typical exponents of the last generation, I would like to mention Tagore and Gandhi. They represent for us the last generation and there is a big gulf between their fundamental thoughts and ideas and of our generation.

If you study the work of Tagore and Gandhi, you will find that all along there is a conflict in their minds as to what their reaction to Western influence should be. So far as Mahatma Gandhi is concerned, he has never given us any clear solution of this problem. He has left people in doubt as to what his attitude is towards the acceptance of Western ideas. Generally speaking his attitude is one of antagonism. But in actual practice he has not always acted in accordance with his own ideas, the reason being that the rest of his countrymen do not share that inner hostility or antagonism which Mahatma Gandhi personally has towards Western ideas and conceptions.

You all know about Mahatma Gandhi's attitude on the question of violence or physical force. He does not advocate the use of arms, or the shedding of the blood of the enemy for gaining one's freedom. This attitude towards violence or physical force is closely related to his general attitude toward foreign influence particularly Western influence.

Our generation has followed Mahatma Gandhi as the leader of a political struggle, but has not accepted his ideas on all these questions. Therefore, it would be a mistake to take Mahatma Gandhi as the exponent of the thoughts and ideas of the present generation in India.

Gandhi is in some ways a complex personality, and I would like to analyse his personality, so that you may understand him better. In Gandhi, there are two aspects—Gandhi as a political leader and Gandhi as a philosopher. We have been following him in his capacity as a political leader but we have not accepted his philosophy.

Now the question arises as to how we can separate the two aspects. Why, if we do not accept his philosophy, are we following him? Though Gandhi has his own philosophy of life he is a practical politician and therefore, he does not force his own philosophy on the people. Consequently though we are following him in our political struggle, we are free to follow our own philosophy. If Gandhi had tried to thrust his philosophy on us we would not have accepted him as a leader. But he has kept his philosophy separate from his political struggle.

Role of Modern Industries

I have mentioned as representatives and exponents of the last generation Tagore and Gandhi. Now let us compare their philosophy. There are some points in which they agree, but in some other points they do not. The points on which they agree are firstly that they would like to see the national struggle being conducted without the use of arms. In other words, on the question of physical force they have the same views. On the question of

the industrialization of the country they also have the same views. Both Tagore and Gandhi are against modern industrial civilization. But in the realm of culture, their views are not same. So far as thought, art and culture are concerned, Tagore is prepared to accept foreign influence. He believes that in the realm of culture there should be full cooperation between India and the rest of the world and there should be reciprocity. We should not be hostile or antagonistic to the culture or art or ideas of any other nation. In the realm of culture, while Tagore advocates full cooperation between India and the rest of the world, Gandhi's general attitude is antagonistic to foreign influence. We must, however, remember that Mahatma Gandhi has nowhere given a very clear exposition of his views. I am only referring to his general attitude on this question.

I have previously remarked that there is a big gulf between the fundamental thoughts and ideas of the last generation and of our generation. I will now explain what I meant thereby. As I have just said, this problem as to what our reaction should be towards foreign influence and towards industrial civilization troubled the leaders of the old generation all their lives and we see proofs of it in their action. But this problem does not exist for us. It does not exist for us because our starting point is that we want a modern India based of course on the past. We do not believe that India can achieve freedom without the use of arms. Now once you take up this attitude, that for winning freedom we have to fight and to use arms, it follows that we must have modern industries to manufacture the arms. So we take our stand on modernism. We have to fight the enemy with modern methods and with modern arms so we must have modern industries. What constituted the biggest problem for the old leaders constitutes our starting point. The problem for modern India is not our attitude toward modernism or foreign influence or industrialization, but how we are to solve our present day problems.

I believe that modern Japan will understand our generation much better than modern Japan understood the last

generation in India Our stand is virtually the same. We want to build up a new and modern nation on the basis of our old culture and civilization. For that we need modern industries, a modern army and all those things necessary to preserve our existence and our freedom under modern conditions.

Problems of Free India

I will now consider some of the problems of Free India. The moment India is free, the most important problem will be the organizing of our national defence in order to safeguard our freedom in the future. For that we shall have to build up modern war industries, so that we may produce the arms that we shall need for self-defence. This will mean a very big programme of industrialization

After satisfying the need of our nation in the matter of self-defence, the next problem in the degree of importance will be that of poverty and unemployment. India today is one of the poorest countries in the world, but India was not poor before we came under British rule. In fact, it was the wealth of India which attracted the European nations to India. One cannot say that in the matter of national wealth or resources India is poor. We are rich in natural resources, but owing to British and foreign exploitation the country has been impoverished. So our second most important problem will be how to give employment to the millions of unemployed in India and how to relieve the appalling poverty which now exists among the masses of the Indian people.

The third problem in Free India will be the problem of education. At present, under the British rule, about 90 per cent, of the people are illiterate. Our problem will be to give at least an elementary education to the Indian masses as soon as possible, and along with that to give more facilities to the intellectual classes in the matter of higher education.

National Script

Connected with the question of education is another problem which is important for India and that is the question of script. In India there are principally two scripts in vogue. one is the script known as the Sanskrit (Or Nagri) script and

the other is the Arabic (or Persian) Script. Up till to-day, in all national affairs and conferences we have been using both these scripts. I must add that in some provinces there are scripts in vogue which are modification of the Sanskrit script. But fundamentally there are two scripts, and in all national affairs and conferences we have to use both these two scripts.

There is now a movement to solve this problem of scripts by using the Latin script. I personally am an advocate of the Latin script. Since we have to live in a modern world, we have to be in touch with other countries and whether we like it or not, we have to learn the Latin script. If we could make the Latin script the medium of writing throughout the country, that would solve our problem. Any way that is my own view and the view of my closest friends and collaborators.

I have referred to three important problems in free India: national defence, how to remove poverty, and how to give education to the people. If we are to solve these three important problems, how are we going to do it? Shall we leave it to private agency and private initiative or will the State take up the responsibility of solving these problems?

Socialistic Pattern for development

Well, at present, public opinion in India is that we can not leave it to private initiative to solve these national problems, especially the economic problem. If we leave it to private initiative to solve the problem of poverty and unemployment for instance it will probably take centuries. Therefore, public opinion in India is in favour of some sort of socialist system, in which the initiative, will not be left to private individuals but the State will take over the responsibility for solving economic questions. Whether it is a question of industrializing the country or modernizing agriculture, we want the State to step in and take over the responsibility and put through reforms within a short period, so that Indian people could be put on their legs at a very early date.

But in solving this problem, we want to work in our own way. We will, naturally study experiments made in other

countries but after all, we have to solve our problems in an Indian way and under Indian conditions. Therefore, the system that we shall ultimately set up will be an Indian system to suit the Indian people.

Now, if we do not tackle the economic question from the point of view of the masses, the majority of whom are poor, if we do not do that in India, we shall produce the same confusion or the same difficulties in our country, as we see in China to day. You see in China to-day a split between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party. Personally, I do not see why this should have occurred or why, if the Kuomintang Party has the interest of the Chinese masses at heart, there should be any need to have a separate party like the Communist Party under foreign influence.

Having learnt from experience, we do not want to repeat the mistake that China has made. We actually find to-day that because the nationalist movement in our generation has identified itself with the interests of the masses that is of the workers and the peasants who form more than 90 per cent of the people, because we have their interests at heart, there is no *raison d'être* for a separate party like the Communist Party. If the nationalists in India did not have the interests of the masses at heart, then you would have seen the same phenomenon as you see in China today.

Political System for Free India

Now we come to another question, namely, the political system or the Government. If we are to have an economic structure of a socialist character, then it follows that the political system must be such as to be able to carry out that economic programme in the best possible way. You can not have a so called democratic system, if that system has to put through economic reforms on a socialistic basis. Therefore, we must have a political system, a State of an authoritarian character.

We have had some experience of democratic institutions in India and we have also studied the working of democratic institutions in countries like France, England and the

United States of America. And we have come to the conclusion that with a democratic system we cannot solve the problems of Free India. Therefore, modern progressive thought in India is in favour of a State of an authoritarian character, which will work as an organ, or as the servant of the masses, and not of a clique or of a few rich individuals.

That is our idea with regard to the political institution in Free India. We must have a Government that will function as the servant of the people and will have full powers to put through new reforms concerning industry, education, defence, etc. in Free India

Religion & Caste System

I should like to mention another point, namely, the attitude of Free India toward religion and caste. This is a question that is frequently asked. India has several religions. Consequently, the Government of free India must have an absolutely neutral and impartial attitude toward all religions and leave it to the choice of every individual to profess or follow a particular religious faith.

With regard to caste, this is now no problem for us because caste, as it existed in the old times, does not exist to-day. Now, what is the caste system? The caste system means that a community is divided into certain groups on a professional or vocational basis and marriage takes place within each group.

In modern India there is no such caste distinction. A member of one caste is free to take up any other profession. So, caste in that sense does not exist today. Then there remains the question of marriage. In the old times, it was the custom to marry within each caste. Nowadays inter-marriage between the different castes takes place freely. Hence caste is fast disappearing. As a matter of fact, in the nationalist movement we never inquire as to what caste a man belongs to and we do not even know the caste of some of our closest collaborators, which shows that in our generation we do not think at all about caste. For Free India, therefore, caste is no problem at all.

In this connection, I should like to tell you that it was the British who created the impression throughout the world that we are a people quarelling among ourselves, especially over religion. But that is an absolutely wrong picture of India. It may be that there are certain differences among our people, differences which we find in every other country. If we take the so-called progressive countries of the world, e.g. France before the outbreak of the present war, or Germany before Hitler and his Party came to power, we will find that there were acute differences among the people in these countries. Spain had even a first class civil war.

But nobody ever says that, because the people in these countries had disputes and differences, they are not fit to rule themselves. It is only in the case of India that the British say that because there are certain differences among the Indian people therefore they are not fit to be free. Again, the fact is that whatever differences there are among the Indian people they are largely the creation of the British Government. There are hundreds of examples to show you that throughout the history of British rule, the British have tried by every possible means to divide the Indian people. After having done so much to artificially create differences among the Indian people, the British turn around and say that we are not fit to be free.

Evolution of a New System

I should also point out that if you take a modern Power like Soviet Russia, you will realize that if inspite of this heterogeneous character, so many different races professing so many different religions could be unified in one political system and become such a strong Power, there is absolutely no reason why India, which has much more homogeneity than the Soviet Union, should not be united as one nation. As a matter of fact, you will find that outside India, where there is no British influence there are no differences among the Indian people. In the Indian independence Movement in East Asia and in the Indian National Army there is no question of religion or caste or class. It is just in India

where the British have influence and control that you will find these differences.

I have already told you about the kind of economic and political system that we would like to have in Free India. Out of this arises the problem as to what our political philosophy is. On this Question, I gave my own views in a book I wrote about ten years ago called the 'Indian Struggle'. In that book I said that it would be our task in India to evolve a system that would be a synthesis of the system in vogue in different parts of the world. For instance, if you take the conflict between Fascism (or what you might call National Socialism) on the one side and Communism on the other, I see no reason why we cannot work out a synthesis of the two systems that will embody the good points of both. It would be foolish for any one to say that any one system represents the last stage in human progress. As students of philosophy, you will admit that human progress never stops and out of the past experience of the world we have to produce a new system. Therefore, we in India will try to work out a synthesis of the rival systems and try to embody the good points of both.

Now, I should like to compare some of the good points of National Socialism and Communism. You will find some things common to both. Both are called anti-democratic or totalitarian. Both are anti-capitalistic. Nevertheless, in spite of these common points, they differ on other points. When, we see National Socialism in Europe to-day, what do we find? National Socialism has been able to create national unity and solidarity and to improve the condition of the masses. But it has not been able to radically reform the prevailing economic system which was built up on a capitalistic basis.

On the other side, let us examine the Soviet experiment based on Communism. You will find one great achievement that is planned economy. Where communism is deficient is that it does not appreciate the value of national sentiment. What we in India would like to have is a progressive system which will fulfil the social needs of the whole people and will be based on national sentiment. In other words, it will be a

synthesis of Nationalism and Socialism. This is something which has not been achieved by the National Socialists in Germany to-day.

There are a few points in which India does not follow Soviet Russia. Firstly, class conflict is something that is quite unnecessary in India. If the Government of Free India begin to work as the organ of the masses, then there is no need for class conflict. We can solve our problems by making the State the servant of the masses.

There is another point which has been over-emphasized by Soviet Russia and that is the problem of the working classes. India being predominantly a country of the peasants the problem of the peasants will be more important than the problem of the working classes.

Another point on which we do not fully agree is that according to Marxism, too much importance is given to the economic factor in human life. We fully appreciate the importance of the economic factor which was formerly ignored but it is not necessary to over-emphasize it.

Concept of a New International Order

To repeat once again, our political philosophy should be a synthesis between National Socialism and Communism. The conflict between this antithesis has to be resolved in a higher synthesis. This is what the Law of Dialectic demands. If this is not done, the human progress will come to an end. India will, therefore, try to move to the next stage of political and social evolution. I will now pass on to the last point in my address and that is our conception of an international order. On this point I have already spoken several times in Tokyo, I fully support the steps that have been taken through the Joint Declaration to create a new order in East Asia on the basis of freedom, justice and reciprocity. I have been personally greatly interested in international problems, 'having tried to work in several countries in order to get support for our movement and in that connection, I also had the opportunity of studying the work of the League of Nations.

The experiment of the League of Nations has failed, and it is desirable and profitable for us to investigate as to why it failed. If I were to answer that I would say that it failed, because the sponsor-nations were too selfish and short-sighted. The sponsor-nations were England, France and America. America dropped out of the League, so the Powers that controlled the League were England and France. Now these two leading Powers, instead of setting an example of unselfishness, tried to use the League of Nations for their selfish interest and for their own benefit. The only basis on which we can set up an international order is freedom, justice and reciprocity. Therefore, the work in East Asia has commenced on the right lines and on the right basis. The only task that remains for us to see that in actual work the principles embodied in the Joint Declaration are put into effect. If they are so put into effect then the experiment will be a success. If not, it will again prove to be a failure.

The success of this experiment will depend on the example set by the sponsor-nations. The League of Nations failed, because the sponsor-nations were selfish and short-sighted. This time if the nations that have joined together, and particularly the sponsor-nations, avoid a selfish and short-sighted policy and work on a moral basis, then I see no reason why the experiment should not be a success.

Role of Youth

I should like to emphasize again the tremendous responsibility which Japan has undertaken by becoming the sponsor-nation in this task. And when I talk of the responsibility of the nation, I want also to stress the responsibility of the youths. The youths of to-day will be the nation and leaders of to-morrow. An idea that is welcomed and supported by the youths will one day be supported by the whole nation. But an idea which does not find support among the youths will die a natural death. Therefore, their responsibility for making this new order a success devolves, in the last analysis, on the youths of this country. I hope and pray that the students who are the future representatives of the nation will

realize the tremendous moral responsibility which Japan has undertaken in initiating this new order.

There may be people who doubt whether a nation can rise to high moral level, whether nation can be far-sighted and unselfish and undertake the work of establishing a new order. I have every faith in mankind. If it is possible, for one individual to be unselfish, to live one's life at a high moral level, I see no reason why an entire nation cannot also rise to that level. In history of the world we have seen examples in which a revolution has changed the mentality of a whole nation and made it rise to a higher level of morality. Therefore, if anybody has any doubt whether an entire nation can rise to that level, then I do not share that doubt.

I repeat, in conclusion, that the sponsor-nation should realize the tremendous responsibility that it has undertaken. This is a task not only for the leaders and the politicians, but for the whole nation and especially for those who are the hopes of the nation...the youths and the students.

NETAJI'S CONCEPT OF SOCIALISM

Since the very beginning of his political life, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose as the President of the Nav Jawan Bharat Sabha, All India Trade Union Congress, Indian National Congress, All India Forward Bloc, Head of the Provisional Azad Hind Sarkar and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Azad Hind Fauj had advocated uncompromising struggle against British Imperialism and had clearly preached that the salvation of India and of the world depended on full blooded Socialism-Scientific Socialism but he also clearly held that India would evolve her own methods to achieve Socialism. Nowhere in this world, Socialism had been established either by Parliamentary system or by the Presidential system of the Government.

Netaji was the only Congress President who while writing in his famous book, 'The Indian Struggle' in 1934 about the post Independence struggle period said, "The Party that is going to fight for freedom is the Party that is entitled to draw up the constitution of India and rule over the country. If we are to have a Socialist Economy, Socialism cannot be established by the so-called Western Democracy. Socialist reconstruction can be done only by dictatorship but that dictatorship should

not be of individuals or of the cliques but of the general masses". Citing the Constituent Assembly of Kerensky's Government, Netaji said "If Lenin had joined it, the Bolshevik Government of Lenin would have never come into existence."

Presiding over the third Indian Political Conference held in London on June 10, 1933, Netaji said "During the nineteenth century, Germany made the most remarkable gift through Marxian Philosophy and during twentieth Century Russia had enriched the culture and civilization of the world through her achievement in proletarian revolution and proletarian culture. The most remarkable contribution to the Culture and Civilization of the world, India would be called upon to make".

Presiding over the fifty first session of the Indian National Congress on February 9, 1938 at Haripura (Gujarat) Netaji said "I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and disease and to the scientific production and distribution, can be effectively tackled only along socialistic lines. The first thing which our future National Government will have to do, would be to set up a Planning Commission for drawing up a comprehensive plan for construction. Last but not the least, the State on the advice of Planning Commission, will have to adopt a comprehensive scheme for gradually socialising our entire agriculture and industrial system in the sphere of both production and distribution",

As the Editor of "The Forward Bloc" the organ of the All India forward Bloc, writing on the role of the Forward Bloc, Netaji said that the Forward Bloc, would prepare the ground to grow into a Marxist Party. This declaration of Netaji as the President of the All India Forward Bloc proves that Netaji was a genuine Scientific Socialist and was neither a National Socialist nor a Fabian Socialist nor a Social Democrat.

At Ramgarh Anti-Compromise Conference on March 20, 1940, it was decided to start a national struggle against

British Imperialism. Netaji sent Late Lala Shankar Lal, the then General Secretary of the All India Forward Bloc and the then President of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee to Japan on a false passport to seek active help from USSR through the Soviet Ambassador in Japan. Meanwhile, Netaji was arrested in Calcutta in connection with the removal of the Hol wel monument.

Lala Shankar Lal came back to Calcutta from Tokyo incognito after finalising the agreement with the Soviet Ambassador in Japan and through late Sarat Chandra Bose, the elder brother of Netaji, message of agreement was communicated to Netaji in Calcutta Jail.

To come out from the Jail and finalise plans to go to Soviet Union via Kabul, Netaji started a fast unto death. He was released and how he escaped from India to Kabul via Peshawar and again from Kabul to Moscow and Berlin and again from Berlin to Singapore, it is now well known. Due to non-aggression pact with U.K., Comrades Stalin and Molotov advised Netaji to take help from Germany and Italy. And Netaji did take help from Germany, Italy and Japan because these three countries were also fighting UK in Second World War.

This background clearly justifies the reason why Netaji had to go to Berlin and Rome because later on the Soviet Press and Communist Party of India had depicted Netaji as fascist and used vulgar and abusive terms against him. However, both the USSR and the CPI had later confessed their mistake and revised their opinion on Netaji.

Two Soviet Indologists had paid rich tributes to the role of the Indian National Army and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the independence struggle. They are Dr. Poddubni and Prof. Raikov. They have stated that Marxist ideas and successes of the Soviet experience had made deep imprint on the mind of Netaji Bose.

Dr. Poddubni repudiated the notion that Netaji was in sympathy with fascism and Nazism. He revealed that when Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union, Netaji

was in Rome and wrote a letter to the Foreign Minister of Germany saying that in a war between Germany and Soviet Union, the sympathies of Indians would be in favour of the latter. Further he disclosed that in the absence of Netaji, Indian Legion (INA in Germany) refused to march against Soviet Union because they were advised by Netaji, when he was leaving Germany for Singapore, to do so.

Netaji was the only political leader in India who supported the sending of Soviet Army on the Finnish border on the ground of the border security. Even the National front (CPI) leaders had no courage and guts to support the Soviet Union's move. It may be remembered here that after the formation of the Azad Hind Government on October 21, 1943, Netaji and his Provisional Government of Azad Hind had not declared war against USSR and China though they were the allies of UK in the Second World War. This foreign policy of the Azad Hind Sarkar of Netaji proves that Netaji, as a genuine Scientific Socialist, was not against any socialist country.

Even after the defeat of the INA in the battlefields in Manipur and Nagaland, Netaji decided to go to USSR via Manchuria.

In June, 1940 while presiding over the All India Forward Bloc Convention at Nagpur, he declared that the All India Forward Bloc was a full fledged Socialist Party within the Indian National Congress and gave clarion call to "All Power to the Indian People".

MERGER SESSION OF THE ALL INDIA FREEDOM FIGHTERS ORGANISATION (AIFFO)

Since Independence India had to face political, socio-economic problems and national disasters besides several other problems obtained as British legacy. The communal rampage in the wake of partition followed by Pakistani aggression over Kashmir was unprecedented in world history. Consolidation of the States and nation-building was a herculean task. Integration of 500 independent States that existed was no less a revolution.

The partition took more blood of the nation than we paid to achieve Independence. For nearly one and a half decades after Independence, the process of development was very slow and we could not provide a firm footing to the national base.

In the meantime, only a handful of the Freedom Fighters who masterminded and struggled for Independence were at the helm of active politics. The realisation of the role of freedom fighters surfaced even more with the deterioration of the health of Pt. Nehru. Until then, the approach was one of relief and rehabilitation rather than channelising their intellectual, moral and disciplined strength and foresight. There was no

centrally consolidated organisation or planned leadership of Freedom Fighters. Some of the State Governments gave a thought to ameliorating the problems of the Freedom Fighters, who were suffering from penury, family burdens and old age, because they had sacrificed all their fortunes in the struggle for the freedom of the country.

It was in the year 1971 that they could impress upon the Central leadership that it was their duty to provide economic assistance to the Freedom Fighters and eliminate their hardships. Now and then some members in the Parliament also voiced the feelings of the Freedom Fighters. Prime Minister, Smt, Indira Gandhi herself came forward and announced in the Parliament in 1972 that she would implement a Freedom Fighters Scheme from August 15, 1972, the Silver Jubilee year of Independence.

Not only a family pension of Rs. 200 a month to each Freedom Fighter was announced, but also senior and selected Freedom Fighters were invited to the Capital on the Independence Day that year. They were felicitated with Tamra Patras, Shawls and Certificates, etc., in New Delhi. It was for the first time after 25 years of freedom that such a gala function was arranged in New Delhi and local functions were held at State and district levels. Tableaus inscribed with the names of Martyrs and Freedom Fighters were taken out. All these activities go to the credit of late Smt. Indira Gandhi, our beloved Prime Minister.

At that time, four All India Organisations of the Freedom Fighters were operating with limited concerns. They were: the All India Freedom Fighters Samiti, the National Federation of Indian Freedom Fighters, the Hindustan Freedom Fighters Association and the Indian National Army Freedom Fighters Association.

It was at the initiative of Indiraji that efforts were made to unite the four organisations into one in 1975. After discussions with the heads of these organisations a preparatory committee was formed to prepare a common basis to unite them. Representatives of these four organisations were taken into the preparatory committee with Baba Prithvi Singh

Azad as president and Shri V.L. Sunder Rao as convener and Late Shri Paramanand Jhansi, Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Shri S.N. Somayajulu and Shri Bharat Singh Chouhan as members. This committee first met at Bangalore on 16th and 17th August, 1975 and then on 2nd November 1975. After prolonged deliberations the name of this committee was changed as Steering Committee and it was authorised to prepare resolutions for the unity conference which was to be held at Bangalore.

The Steering Committee named the organisation as All India Freedom Fighters Organisation which held its session on 12th, 13th and 14th of February 1976 at Bangalore in the famous Glass House in Lal Bagh.

A sub-committee to draft the Constitution was constituted with Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, Shri S.N. Somayajulu, Shri V.L. Sunder Rao and Prof. Mahesh Dutt Mishra.

This preparatory committee co-opted all office bearers and heads of the four organisations. This committee held meetings on the eve of the Conference and finalised drafts which were placed before the Conference on 10th and 11th of February 1976 at Bangalore.

The Conference was inaugurated by Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi. The National Flag was hoisted by Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P. It was presided over by Baba Prithvi Singh Azad.

Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, the then General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee came three days in advance to participate in the deliberations of the Steering Committee and guide its proceedings.

Thus the formation of a unified national organisation helped in attaining complete solidarity and unity among the Freedom Fighters and in placing before the Government not only their own problems but also their mature and considered views on the problems that stared the nation in its face.

PROF. N.G. RANGA'S MESSAGES TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS LIVING ABROAD

Fellow Freedom Fighters,

We invite you to send your delegates to our All India Freedom Fighters Conference, to be held in Bangalore, the Indian Centre of Science-Elite and Modern Technology.

We have all distinguished ourselves by our successful fight for our National Freedom. We have celebrated our triumph over colonial oppression and imperialist domination. We have thus answered our nation's Call. we have to answer yet another Call, equally urgent and sacred, but emanating from all humanity. We seek your comradeship in hearkening to this Call and in meeting its challenge.

The Second World war sounded the death-knell of imperialism of the last century. It has also led to the emergence of even greater and more terrific threat, this time, not only to our freedom but also to the very existence of humanity by aborting the Nuclear Power for destruction.

Surely we cannot rest on our oars, while the new threat is weakening the morale of humanity as a whole.

For centuries our Asian people have been denied by imperialism, the opportunity to march along with the technologically awake and progressing West. Whatever accumulated nuggets of philosophic insights and religious ecstasies our ancients had achieved were confined to the privileged few, who were themselves prisoners of reaction and superstition. We have now to telescope over centuries and adventurous trials and achievements of the hegemonistic and imperialistic West and win our honourable place and opportunities in this nuclear and space age world.

For decades, mutual distrust and suspicion have prevented nations of the East and West from responding to each others' genuine calls for mutual trust and co-operation to ensure prevalence of peace between nations. Even the Bandung's clarion call for Panchsheela went unheeded.

More than half of our peoples in all countries are steeped in poverty of mind and body, sub-human malnutrition and lack of protection from vagaries of weather and degrading social inequalities and absence of hope or happiness. Therefore the need of our people for peace and planned development on all fronts at almost break-neck speed is too great. We must march fast, almost breathlessly. For this our need for peace is painfully too great. To achieve this peace, we have to make maximum sacrifices and overcome the usual impediments of pride, prejudice, political prestige or social conventions. When the European nations with all their vaunted prosperity and progress have dismissed these cobwebs to march towards continental peace and unity, we, the Freedom Fighters should consider it our sacred duty to help our poor and long suffering Asian humanity to recapture the spirit of Buddha and march towards Asian cooperation and peace and universal happiness.

Wars in Vietnam and West Asia and border skirmishes between nations in Asia in which all Super Powers and their allies have spread with each other have made them realise the utter indispensability of peaceful co-existence of Panchasheela. China and USA on one side, Soviet Union and USA on the other side have agreed to live in

peace with each other and these three great powers and their allies and friends and continental and inter-continental neighbours have to be persuaded and helped to hold their hands together and allow their hearts to pulsate with mutual understanding and forbearance.

We have here, a noble role to play, as urgent and sacred as the role we have so far played in achieving our national freedom.

The youth of to-day have to be re-assured that we the knight templars of the earlier struggles are humane and farsighted enough to place ourselves in the vanguard of their ebullient generation-yearning for peace, prosperity and happiness in the wake of achievement of national freedom, in their march towards peace between nations, co-operation between continents and comradeship between mentors and leaders, scientists and philosophers of all peoples of world.

We invite you to send your delegates to join us, at Bangalore, to explore ways and means for organising the preparatory Conference or Seminars to develop the movement for Mutual Co-operation between Asian Peoples in the first instance (MCAP). We look forward to the constructive contributions from your fraternal delegates in this Gandhian-way towards Asian Peace.

With Regards,

Yours Sincerley,
Sd/-
(Prof. N.G. RANGA)

MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION & RULES ADOPTED DURING BANGALORE ESSION

Memorandum and Articles of Association

I. Preamble

Whereas the duly elected representatives of the All India Freedom Fighters Samiti, the National Federation of Indian Freedom Fighters, the Hindustan Fighters' Association and the Indian National Army Freedom Fighters Association, have agreed to merge those bodies into a common Organisation, this Conference of the Freedom Fighters, being the members of the aforesaid four institutions and others, having assembled at Bangalore on the 12th, 13th days of Feb. 1976 hereby approves and adopts this Constitution for the common Organisation.

1. Name

The name of the Organisation shall be "All India Freedom Fighters' Organisation", hereinafter referred to as "ORGANISATION",

2. Commencement

The Organisation shall come into existence immediately, on the adoption of this Constitution by the Conference referred to in the Preamble.

3. Registered Office

The Registered Office of the Organisation shall be at New Delhi, in the Union Territory of New Delhi in the premises to be specified by the Executive Committee.

4. Area of Operation

The Organisation shall operate throughout India and may also establish its branches outside India.

5. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Organisation shall be :

- I. To work in the furtherance and for the advancement of democracy, scientific socialism and for the speedy establishment of a Socialistic Republic of India as enshrined in the Indian Constitution;
- II. to maintain the unity and integrity of India ;
- III. to work for the preservation, stability and strengthening of India's Independence ;
- IV. to inculcate the spirit of discipline in all national and personal affairs ;
- V. to bring out an atmosphere wherein rights are accompanied by the fulfilment of obligations ;
- VI. to make India's freedom meaningful to the Indian masses in general and the down-trodden in particular, by fully implementing socio-economic programmes ;
- VII. to promote the spirit of internationalism on the basis of the Panchasheela Principles ;
- VIII. to promote the rehabilitation and welfare of Freedom Fighters ;
- IX. to establish "Shaheed Memorials" in various places in India and outside ;

- X. to collect and preserve all materials connected with the activities and achievements of Freedom Fighters ;
- XI. to arrange for publication and distribution of literature connected with the freedom struggle and the activities and achievements of Freedom Fighters ;
- XII. to organise and bring together all Freedom Fighters ;
- XIII. to prepare and maintain a Register of Freedom Fighters with their photographs and biographical accounts ;
- XIV. to foster the spirit of comradeship and promote mutual co-operation amongst the members of the Organisation ;
- XV. to act for and represent Freedom Fighters in all matters wherever necessary ;
- XVI. to publish and maintain an organ in furtherance of the objectives of the Organisation ;
- XVII. to co-operate with other institutions and persons with similar aims and objectives ;
- XVIII. to co-operate with the authorities in matters connected with the advancement of the aims and the objectives of the Organisation ;
- XIX. to undertake all activities and measures to accomplish the aims and objectives of the Organisation ;
- XX. to organise libraries, reading rooms, museums, etc. with a view to house and propagate revolutionary and patriotic literature ;
- XXI. to carry out the aforesaid aims and objectives, the Organisation is empowered to do or to perform the following :
 - (a) To raise funds by subscriptions, donation, sale of publications, aids, gifts, proceeds of

shows or by other means as may be deemed fit for the purpose of the organisation and to procure any securities for the organisation by a trust deed or other assurances ;

- (b) to purchase, take on lease or in exchange or otherwise acquire any movable or immovable property or privileges therein and to sell, mortgage, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose off or deal with all or any of the properties belonging to the Organisation ;
- (c) to purchase or otherwise acquire, build, construct, establish, maintain, reconstruct, equip, alter any building, office, workshops, plants, machinery, or other things necessary for all or any of the objectives of the Organisation ;
- (d) to borrow money with or without security or to draw, make, accept, endorse, discount, execute or issue promissory notes, letters of exchange, warrants, debentures, or other negotiable instruments ;
- (e) to invest the money of the Organisation, not immediately required in such manner and upon such security as any, from time to time, be determined ;
- (f) to perform all such acts and things as may be necessary for the attainment of the aims and objectives of the Organisation.

RULES

1. (a) The organisation shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal ;
- (b) The organisation shall have two constituent units :
 - (i) The National Council of 500 members, and
 - (ii) The Executive Committee of 200 Members.

The National Council :

2. (a) The membership of the National Council of the Organisation shall be open to any person who had participated in India's freedom struggle ;
 - (i) in any manner specified and subject to the verification laid down by the Govt. from time to time in this behalf ; and
 - (ii) in such other manner and such verification as may, from time to time be laid down by the Executive Committee of the Organisation ; and who has paid an annual subscription of rupees ten.
- (b) In any dispute or matter pertaining to the eligibility of any person or persons to the membership of the Organisation, the Executive Committee shall be final and binding and no question shall be raised in any form in any Court of Law ;
- (c) The strength of the National Council shall be one tenth of the number of enrolled members or 500, whichever is less ;
- (d) Each State shall have seven and each Union Territory three members in the Council irrespective of the number of its enrolled members ; the remaining number or members in the National Council shall be in proportion to the enrolled membership in the States and Union territories ;
- (e) Out of the annual subscription of rupees ten paid by each member rupees four shall be allotted to the Central Organisation ; the apportionment of the remaining amount between the State and the lower units shall be as laid down by regulations.

Executive Committee :

3. (a) There shall be an Executive Committee of the Organisation in which the management of the Organisation shall vest,

- (b) The Executive Committee shall consist of :—
 - (i) A Presidium of 12 members including one Working President,
 - (ii) 2 Vice-Presidents (iii) Six General Secretaries
 - (iv) 12 Secretaries, (v) One Treasurer, and
 - (vi) 157 members out of whom one at least shall be from each State and Union Territory.
- (c) The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt members, as it deems fit ; in particular, such co-option shall be intended to give adequate representation to such areas and sections as are so represented.
- (d) The Executive Committee shall determine from time to time the determination of zones referred to in (b) above.

Elections :

- 4. (a) The term of office of the Executive Committee shall ordinarily be three years, at the end of which the National Council shall elect a new Executive Committee, in accordance with the regulations framed by the Executive Committee—

Provided that for the first term of three years the Executive Committee shall be set up in such manner and with such person as may, in this behalf be decided upon by the Conference convened at Bangalore, as mentioned in the Preamble.

- (b) Subject to the other provisions of this Constitution, every Executive Committee constituted as aforesaid shall hold office for three years from the day of its election or constitution and shall remain in office till a new Executive is elected as prescribed.

Annual and Special Meeting of the National Council

- 5. (a) There shall be an annual meeting of the National Council of the Organisation to be convened within three months at the end of every year, to perform the following functions :

- (i) to consider and pass the Annual Report and the audited accounts for the previous year as prepared and submitted by the Executive Committee ;
 - (ii) to consider the budget submitted by the Executive Committee for the next year ;
 - (iii) to consider and approve the programme of activities for next year, as submitted by Executive Committee ;
 - (iv) to appoint Auditors and fix their remuneration ;
 - (v) to constitute Sub-Committee or Sub-Committees, if necessary for any specific purpose ;
 - (v) to elect members of the Executive Committee ; when such elections are due ;
 - (vi) to consider any other matter duly notified or introduced by the permission of the Chair ;
- (b) A special meeting of the General Body shall be convened, on the requisition of not less than 50 members, to consider the subject specified in the requisition ;
- (c) A special meeting may also be called as directed by the President of the Executive Committee at any time, to consider any subject to be mentioned in the notice for the meeting.
- (d) Twenty days' clear notice for the Annual General Meeting and ten days' clear notice for a special meeting shall be issued in writing and sent to members by post, under certificate of posting ;
- (e) Decision in the Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the General Body shall be taken by the majority of votes. In case of the equality of votes, the presiding member shall have a casting vote ;
- (f) The quorum in the General Meeting of the General Body shall be 50 or 1/5th of the total membership of the organisation, whichever is less ;

- (g) The Meeting of the General Body—whether General or Special, shall be presided over by the President ; in the absence of the President by the Working President, in the absence of the President and Working President, by a Vice President according to the seniority on the basis of age; and, in the absence of the all the said office-bearers, by a member of the General Body specially elected by it for the occasion ;
- (h) Every number of the General Body shall have one vote at its meeting for a decision on any subject ;

Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Organisation :

- 6. (a) The Executive Committee of the Organisation shall meet, as often as is necessary, to perform its functions ;
- (b) Fifteen days' clear notice of the ordinary meeting of the Executive Committee shall be given in writing and sent to members by post, under certificate of posting. Ten days' clear notice shall be given in a similar manner for an urgent meeting of the Executive Committee ;
- (c) The meeting of the Executive Committee shall be presided over by the President ; in his absence by the Working President in the absence of the President and Working President by one of the Vice-Presidents in accordance with the seniority on the basis of age ; and in the absence of all these office-bearers, by any member of the Executive Committee elected by it for the occasion ;
- (d) Decision in the Executive Committee shall be taken by majority of votes. In case of equality of votes, the Presiding member shall have a casting vote ;
- (e) The quorum for the Executive Committee shall be **fifteen.**

Power and Functions of the Executive Committee of the Organisation :

7. (a) The Executive Committee shall have power—

- (i) to undertake all such activities and measures as may further the aims and objectives of the Organisation ;
 - (ii) to carry out policy and programme as laid down by the General Body ;
 - (iii) to maintain proper accounts in the ordinary course of business and get them audited ;
 - (iv) to appoint members of the staff and fix their salaries, subject to the approval or ratification of the General Body ;
 - (v) to open an account in the name of the Organisation in any of the nationalised banks as determined by a resolution of the Executive Committee ;
 - (vi) to prepare an annual report of all its activities till the end of the year and submit it to the annual meeting of the General Body ;
 - (vii) to prepare and submit annual budget for the next year to the annual meeting of the General Body for its consideration ;
 - (viii) to prepare and submit a programme of work for the next year to the annual meeting of the General Body ;
- (b) All contributions received shall be deposited in the said bank. The account shall be operated jointly by the President and the Treasurer or, in their absence, by any two members of the Executive Committee authorised by them ;
- (c) The Executive Committee may constitute sub-committees for any special purposes and delegate to them such powers and functions as may be deemed

necessary. The President shall be the Chairman of such Sub- Committees so appointed and shall submit reports of their activities to the Executive Committee from time to time and may seek its guidance.

Duties of the General Secretaries :

8. The General Secretaries shall—

- (a) Supervise day-to-day administration ;
- (b) maintain correct and proper accounts in the ordinary course of business and keep custody of all records and registers as required by the Executive Committee ;
- (c) prepare and maintain all registers, : vouchers, balance sheets and other documents required for the transaction of the business of the Organisation ;
- (d) guide, supervise and control the work of the salaried staff ; and
- (e) perform such other functions and duties as may be entrusted to him by the Executive Committee and the President ;
- (f) receive money and make payments on behalf of the Organisation ;
- (g) arrange to get the accounts audited and place the audit report before the Executive Committee and General Body ;
- (h) prepare a General report of the activities of the Executive Committee till the end of the year, prepare a programme of activities for the next year and place before the Executive Committee and General Body ;
- (i) prepare budget for the next year and place it before the Executive Committee and the General Body ;
- (j) maintain the minutes books and the records of the Executive Committee, its Sub-Committees and the General Body.

Financial Powers :—

9. The financial powers of the different units of the Organisation shall be as under :—

- (a) The General Body — Unlimited ;
- (b) The Executive Committee — Rs. 5000 without reference to the General Body for a single item of expenditure.

All items requiring expenditure of over Rs 5000 shall be incurred only with the approval of the General Body. However, in urgent matters, the President may accord the necessary approval and get it ratified by the General Body at its next meeting ;

- (c) The General Secretary — Without limit in the case of the salaries of the Establishment, allowances and journey expenses of members attending meetings as sanctioned by the Executive Committee and the General Body ;

He may incur the expenditure of Rs. 500 in the case of construction works and Rs. 100 in other cases such as meeting, contingent expenditure over stationery and other such requirement.

Moneys

10. (a) Moneys and funds received by or for the Organisation shall, forthwith, be deposited in a nationalised bank or banks approved by the Executive Committee ; all payments above Rs. 25 shall be made by cheque.

- (b) The Secretary may maintain a cash on hand up to Rs. 500 for meeting day-to-day expenditure ;
- (c) Any surplus after meeting the necessary expenditure shall be utilised in the following manner :—

- (i) Not less than 20 per cent shall be credited to the Reserve Fund to be set up ;
- (ii) Not less than 20 per cent of the balance shall be set apart as a Fund for building and other fixed assets ;

- (iii) Of the balance not more than 50 per cent may be used by the Executive Committee for speedy development activities in furtherance of the aims and objectives of the Organisation; subject to the prior approval of the Executive Committee and the General Body, and the balance of the amount may be kept at the disposal of the General Body according to the legal requirements.

11. Year for the Purposes of the Activities of the Organisation.

The year for the purposes of the activities of the Organisation shall be from the 1st April to 31st March of the next calendar year.

12. Office Hours :

The working hours of the office shall be as determined by the Executive Committee.

13. Legal Proceedings :

The General secretary in his official capacity may sue or be sued for and on behalf of the Organisation.

14. Amendment :

An amendment to this Constitution shall be made only by the General Body in special General Body Meeting called for the purpose by 2/3rd majority of the members present and voting and by not less than 50 per cent of the total membership of the Organisation.

15. Dissolution :

The Organisation may be dissolved by the National Council in a special meeting called for this purpose by not less than 4/5th of the members present and voting and not less than 66 per cent of the total membership. On dissolution, the assets and funds of Organisation shall be transferred by General Body by a resolution passed in special General Meeting convened for the purpose of dissolution, in the same manner as for dissolution to another institution with aims and objectives similar to those of the Organisation.

FELICITATION TO FORMER PRESIDENT GIANI ZAIL SINGH

Special session of the Freedom Fighters was held and farewell was given to former President Giani Zail Singh on June 22, 1987, at Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi.

After honouring and felicitating Giani Zail Singh the Session was converted into a full fledged freedom fighters' convention under the Chairmanship of Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, ex-M.P., Working President of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation.

Prominent among those who participated in the deliberations were Late Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, Shri C. Rajeshwar Rao, General Secretary, Communist Party of India, Comrade Ramkishan, ex-Chief Minister of Punjab, Col. P.S. Raturi, INA, Shri Tulsidas Jadhav, ex-M.P. (Maharashtra), Shri V.L. Sunder Rao (Andhra Pradesh), Dr. T. Kannan (Tamil Nadu), Shri N. Alexander, ex-M.P. (Kerala), Captain S.S. Yadav, INA (Haryana), Shri Shashi Bhushan ex-M.P. (Madhya Pradesh), Shri K.B. Choudhary (Assam), Shri S.K. Sengupta (West Bengal), Shri Ramlakhan

Singh Yadav, M.L.A. Shri Mungerilal (Bihar), Shri Ram Kishore Rastogi, ex-M.L.C. (U.P.), Shri K.K. Naiker (Karnataka), Shri Ram Babu Nishal (Maharashtra), Shri Yoganand (Gujarat), Shri B.K. Pani, ex-M.P. (Orissa), Shri Jagat Ram Joshi (Delhi), Sardar Karan Singh Uppal (Punjab), Shri Puran Chand Azad, ex-M.L.C. (Haryana), Dr. Madan Mohan Chopra, and Shri T.N. Kundra, Shri R.L. Chanana, Shri Inder Singh Bhatia, and Shri Abdul Rehman (J & K).

More than 4,000 delegates from all the States and the Union Territories attended both the felicitation function and the Session. The Session adopted the following resolutions.

V.L. Sunder Rao
(General Secretary)

ALL INDIA FREEDOM FIGHTERS ORGANISATION

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED IN THE SPECIAL SESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 1 : HOMAGE TO MARTYRS

This All-India convention of Freedom Fighters remembers all the fellow Freedom Fighters who laid down their lives for the cause of freedom. We owe it to the martyrs of India's freedom struggle that today we are able to hold our head high as free citizens of an Independent India. By paying our homage to them, we pledge to work for the realization of their dreams and to do our best to build a democratic, secular and socialist India.

RESOLUTION NO. 2 : THE POLITICAL SITUATION

We, the veteran freedom fighters assembled at our Convention at the Talkatora Indoor Stadium, New Delhi on June 22, 1987, record it with grief in our hearts that the

situation in the country has deteriorated further since we met last at Nagpur.

The divisive and fissiparous tendencies spreading dissension and hatred among our people are on the increase as is the fundamentalism of creed, caste, language and religion. People are fed day in and day out on feelings of exclusiveness, imagined superiority, self-righteousness and separatism. In the name of these supposed "virtues", they are being roused to frenzied passions so that they might lose all reason and the sense of proportion. Lies, calumnies, fabrications and disinformation are being assiduously made into acceptable norms of life. Thoroughly corrupt groups have assumed offensive postures and are trying to implicate every national institution and every national leader in acts of omission and commission by way of justification for their own lack of ethics and irresponsible, unpatriotic deeds.

Senseless acts of terrorism against innocent women and children show no sign of decrease. Communal riots have become such a regular feature of our national life that we no longer experience any great sense of shock and shame when we hear about them. Caste killings and persecution of new kulaks is on the increase while the newly rich of the town are fleecing the common man with impunity and indulging in profiteering and black-marketing as never before.

In such a situation it is obvious that only stringent measures by the Government as well as a concerted effort by the people can save the country from getting ruined. The Government has to demonstrate how that it means business when it warns black marketeers, hoarders, smugglers and profiteers not to indulge in practices that are potentially harmful or fatal to the country.

The people have to show that they retain the spirit of non-cooperation with profiteers and exploiters, even if they were native and not foreign, brown and not white.

We urge the people and the Government to realize that our nation is facing a great danger from the imperialist

forces, who are encircling us with military bases and heavily armed surrogates, and may subvert our nationally accepted policies. Every kind of pressure is being put on us to compel us to give up Non-Alignment, our support to liberation movements and the forces of democracy, socialism, peace and progress. It is the imperialist powers who are inspiring and encouraging forces of disruption that threaten our unity. A weak, divided and balkanized India is desired by such forces so that this subcontinent remains a ready market for their products and a supplier of brain workers and raw materials to them.

We pledge to maintain the unity and national integration and to work for planned development, for the growth of the public sector and to educate our people in the spirit of democracy, secularism and socialism which alone can remove the cause of disaffection and discontent among the people. A strong and united India is needed not only for the progress of our people but also for guaranteeing peace and security in Asia and the World.

RESOLUTION NO. 3 : COMMUNAL RIOTS

This convention of Freedom Fighters records its deep anguish at the periodical recurring of communal riots in different parts of our country. We are fully conscious of the fact that seeds of tension, acrimony and hatred sown by the British colonialists in order to divide us and to rule us have taken deep roots, and the imperialist forces, today, are tending them with great care and attention. This also is common knowledge that the British colonialists of yesterday and the neocolonialists of today could succeed in their designs only because they have found rabid communalists, reactionaries and fundamentalists who rouse religious, parochial, regional, linguistic and caste passions to create disunity and dissension among the people. These forces which are working in alliance with and in the interests of imperialist forces, have to be exposed and made ineffective.

The Freedom Fighters are of the confirmed opinion that the imperialist forces and their allies among the internal

reaction can be fought only if the people assert their united will to eradicate the evil of communalism. For this, the people have to be educated and told in clear and simple terms how communalism and casteism are eating into the vitals of democracy and secularism. The people must know and understand that the real problems faced by the country—economic backwardness, unemployment, lack of housing and proper food, inadequacy of educational and health services cannot be solved by casteist and communalist, parochial and linguistic rabble-rousers. On the other hand, such politicians weaken the country by encouraging fissiparous tendencies.

The problems facing the country can be solved only through planned national economic development, by strengthening the public sector, by creating a scientific temper through secular education and upbringing.

We, the Freedom Fighters resolve that we shall do our utmost in educating the people in the above spirit and in fighting against the communal and casteist virus.

RESOLUTION NO. 4 : SRI LANKA

This Convention of the Freedom Fighters expresses its solidarity with the Tamil people of Sri Lanka who are carrying out struggle for their rights as citizens of Sri Lanka. It is a matter of shame for the ruling circles of the island state to indulge in chauvinistic rhetoric and themselves to be used by the U.S. imperialists in denying the Tamil people proper participation in the affairs of the state. The ruling circles of Sri Lanka must realize that the imperialist game is to gain a foothold on the northern part of the island, which they want to acquire and develop as a naval base. It is only incidental that the particular area eyed by the imperialists, is inhabited by the Tamil people whom they are anxious to drive out of their homeland.

The ruling circles of Sri Lanka, after becoming a party to the imperialist designs, have taken help from imperialist forces and did their best to strafe, bomb and to flush the Tamil people out of their homes in Jaffna. By their use of high-handed terrorist tactics, the rulers of Sri Lanka have only

aggravated further the feeling of alienation and victimization experienced by the Tamil people. They are being forced and provoked to take to arms in self-defence so that the Sri Lanka rulers might prove themselves to be justified in taking stringent measures. The Sri Lankan Government must understand that economic blockade of their own citizens, indiscriminate bombing, forcing them to starvation and driving them out of the country cannot be watched passively by the Indian people. Our anxiety for their well-being is deep and sincere. Our sympathy for and solidarity with them is based on our humanitarianism. We would feel the same way if the Sinhalese people were to be similarly persecuted and victimised. That is why we resented when our relief supplies, sent without any military escort, were not allowed to reach the people. And that is why our Government was forced to air-drop the supplies to the people of Jaffna.

We are gratified to note that now an agreement has been reached between the Government of India and that of Sri Lanka on the delivery and distribution of relief supplies to the Tamil people. We urge the Government of Sri Lanka to give up the path of confrontation, not to become a pawn in the imperialist game, to return to the path of reason, and to solve the so-called Tamil problem through dialogue and political will.

We appeal to our Government to help the Sri Lankan Government in every possible way in finding a political solution to the problem and to extend all help to the Tamil people of Sri Lanka to ensure their survival as equal and responsible citizens of Sri Lanka.

RESOLUTION NO. 5 : SHRI RAJIV GANDHI'S VISIT TO USSR

The Freedom Fighters of India, assembled in their Convention at Delhi on June 22, 1987, note with gratification that Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi is to visit the Soviet Union shortly to inaugurate the Festival of India jointly with General Secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev.

We hail this exposure of the people of the Soviet Union to the Indian culture to be followed by the exposure of the people of India to the culture of the people of the USSR knowing that an appreciation of each other's culture is the sure way to lead to a better understanding and friendship. We, however, hope that the two leaders would avail of this opportunity for discussing the international situation, particularly the situation around India, in the Indian Ocean and in the Gulf region.

India is threatened by imperialist forces from all sides. Pakistan is being provided with most sophisticated arms, including AWACS and is being encouraged to develop nuclear capability only to put India under constant pressure. Sri Lanka is being surreptitiously aided by client states of U.S.A. to assume a threatening posture in relationship with India and to get the northern part of the Island clear, for a take-over by the U.S. forces, as a base in close proximity to India. At the same time, the prolonged and destructive Iran-Iraq war had provided the U.S. a justification for increasing its presence in the region.

It is clear to all the right-thinking people that this increasing tension around India poses a danger not only to India but also to peace in Asia and the world. It is equally clear that the danger can be minimised and eliminated only through the joint and concerted efforts on the part of the socialist and Non-Aligned countries, above all the USSR and India, who have consistently worked for peace in the world.

We hope that the two leaders, Shri Rajiv Gandhi and Com. Mikhail Gorbachev would give their attention to the problems of peace in Asia and the world, and work out bold steps to ensure the security of the people of Asia.

RESOLUTION NO. 6 : BADSHAH KHAN

We, the veteran Freedom Fighters who have assembled here from all parts of the country, express our deep gratitude to the Government of India for having invited Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan for treatment and convalescence.

“Badshah Khan”, as he is fondly and respectfully called, is known to us as one of the staunchest, most courageous and relentless fighter for the freedom of the sub-continent. In the finest traditions of Mahatma Gandhi, Badshah Khan has carried on his fight against social injustice and oppression in spite of his advanced years and many prolonged imprisonment. For us, he is a beacon light who shows us the path of dedicated service to our people, of continuing struggle against imperialist oppression, and social injustice and of unflinching faith in non-violence.

From the bottom of our hearts, we wish Badshah Khan speedy recovery, good health and a long life.

Note : Badshah Khan died on January 19, 1988.

RESOLUTION NO. 7 : CHARTER OF DEMANDS

1. As per the previous practice and the decision of the non-official Advisory Committee of Freedom Fighters to the Home Ministry, this special Convention of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation demands the Home Ministry to sanction monthly Freedom Fighters' Sanman pension to all the freedom fighters, whose cases were recommended by the State and the Union Territory Governments, without any further delay.

2. This special Convention of the Freedom Fighters is of the opinion that the widows of the Freedom Fighters numbering several thousands, who are getting freedom fighters' Sanman pension from the Central Government, have been deprived of first Class Railway passes as had been decided on the initiative taken by the late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi and announced in the Parliament in February 1984 by the then Railway Minister Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhary. This Convention requests the Union Government to issue Railway passes to all as initiated by the late Smt. Indira Gandhi and as announced by the Railway Minister in the Parliament.

3. The Convention demands the Home Ministry to sanction at least Rupees three hundred to all the freedom fighters of Delhi, as initiated in Goa and Pondicherry.

4. This Convention thanks the Indian Union Home Ministry for the enhancement of the freedom fighters' Sanman pension to all Andaman-returned freedom fighters from Rs. 500 to Rs. 800 per month.

5. This Convention also demands that the freedom fighters' Sanman pension must be enhanced from Rs. 500 to atleast Rs. 750, as it was done in the case of Andaman-returned freedom fighters.

From the Chair of Special Convention of A.I.F.F.O.

PROPOSED BY:

1. Baba Prithvi Singh Azad
2. Shashi Bhushan
3. Com. Ram Kishan
4. A. Bhattacharjee
5. P.S. Ramu
6. Capt. S.S. Yadav

SECONDED BY:

- V.L. Sunder Rao
 - N. Alexander
 - Tulsidas Jadhav
 - M.M. Chopra
 - Ram Kishore Rastogi
 - K.B. Chaudhari
-

FELICITATION TO SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE BY A.I.F.F.O.

A Session of the Central Secretariat of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation was held to felicitate Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee on 21st March, 1982, at Patna to commemorate his 76th Birthday.

The Central Secretariat of AIFFO places on record the relentless patriotic services of Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, the saga of the martyrs, particularly the Azad Hind Movement, the achievements of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Hindustan Republican Socialist Army and others.

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee had his lessons and roots in the Kisan Movement, and later he found himself with all the radical and progressive forces who were in the forefront of our Freedom Struggle.

Our Central Secretariat congratulates the Felicitation Committee Chairman Shri Radhanandan Jha and its members for organising in Patna, the 76th birthday of Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, our Working President.

This Secretariat also thanks Dr. Jagannath Mishra, the Chief Minister of Bihar for having granted suitable site for

the construction of Netaji Bhawan and for assuring sizeable grant for the completion of the Bhawan as a memorial of the Indian Struggle for Independence.

The Committee wishes Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee a very active, healthy and long life in the service of the country.

NETAJI BHAWAN AT PATNA

The Bihar State Freedom Fighters Organisation took a decision to set up a fund and present it to Yajeeji on his 80th birthday as a token of his patriotic services, particularly rendered to the Freedom Fighters and for their welfare throughout the country with a singular devotion.

On that occasion, a meeting of the working committee of the AIFFO was convened at Patna. Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P. and the Deputy leader of the Congress Party in the Parliament gave the inaugural speech, and Baba Prithvi Singh Azad presided.

Nearly 20 thousand freedom fighters rallied, marking the biggest congregation ever seen in a State conference. Sometime back, an appeal was made to collect the birthday fund of Rs. 75,000, but the actual collection rose to Rs. 1,25,000. When it was presented to Yajeeji, he declared that he was donating the entire amount to construct the Netaji Bhawan in Patna, in the memory of those martyrs who sacrificed their lives during the Freedom Struggle. This Bhawan will house the State Freedom Fighters Organisation.

MEMORIAL TO NETAJI AND INA MARTYRS IN INDIA AND ABROAD

History repeats itself, as somebody said. Now fortyfive years after the death of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose it is beholden to the grateful and patriotic countrymen of India, to bring the remains of Netaji from the temple of Renkoji in Tokyo to India.

It is the second instance in the history of the world. After the battle of Waterloo and defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte, the British Allies had court-marshalled him for life imprisonment at St. Helena, a remote island from British Isles, so that he may not be whisked away to his motherland and become an unquestioned monarch again.

Within a decade of exile at St. Helena, he died and was cremated there itself. Fifteen years after his death, the people of France sent an ultimatum to Britain demanding the coffin of Napoleon to be carried to his motherland so that the people could construct a fitting memorial to him. This ultimatum of France brought Britain to senses and all permissions were granted. Even after the death of Napoleon, he was declared victorious.

Out of love and affection for Netaji the Indian people could not believe the news of the death of Netaji in the air-

crash, which occurred near Teipei. The people could not be convinced inspite of the eye witness account of Col. Habibur Rahman, I.N.A. who came here and explained the aircrash in detail.

The Indian Government had taken initiative in appointing two commissions namely Shah Nawaz Khan Commission and Khosla Commission. Both of them concluded that Netaji Subhas met his end in the aircrash. But the Government of India did not undertake the responsibility of bringing the ashes of Netaji to this country or thought of any alternative. Neither the followers of Netaji nor INA personnel took any step to counter the mystic propaganda that Netaji was alive. At least now they have come forward and formed a Netaji Memorial Committee and decided to bring his ashes to India. Hence let us not raise the controversy any further and thank those committee members and others who came forward to help them in getting the ashes of Netaji from Japan.

Prof. N.G. Ranga, M.P., Deputy Leader of the Congress Party in Parliament and member of the Presidium of the AIFP Organisation; Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Ex-M.P., Working President of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation; Dr. Sisir Bose, Ex-M.L.A., son of late Shri Sarat Chandra Bose, and President, Netaji Research Bureau, Col. Sehgal, INA, Col. Lakshmi Sehgal, INA, Col. G.S. Dhillan, INA, Shri Manuboi Doshi, INA, advisor to Azad Hind Govt., Presidents and General Secretaries of All India INA Organisation, Col. Raturi, Capt. S.S. Yadav, Lt. Hariram, Com. Ramkrishan, Ex-M.P. and Ex-Chief-Minister of Punjab, Ch. Ranbir Singh, Ex.-Minister in Punjab and Central Govt.; Sarvashri Joychandra Singh of Imphal, General Secretaries of the AIFFO, Shashi Bhushan, Ex-M.P., Rajpal Singh Warrior, V L Sunder Rao, N. Alexander, Ex-M.P., Dr. T. Kanan, Jagat Ram Joshi, Indrajit Bhatia, R.P. Patil, Rati Ram and several outstanding national leaders have become members and taken the responsibility of the Committee and its programmes. Many others are yet to join. Efforts are being made to have a committee on National level, repre-

sending all the States. The objective is to create a National consensus.

Since the Committee is formed efforts are being made to convince the Govt. to shoulder the responsibility of bringing the ashes of Netaji to India. When ~~was~~ a letter was send^d to the former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi, a reply was received through Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, the then External Affairs Minister (dated 10th May, 1989) stating that *"it is worthwhile to await the emergence of a clear national consensus on the question."* A similar reply was also received from the predecessors of Shri Rajiv Gandhi.

Now in spite of the Committee's best efforts we have not been able to get an interview on this issue with the present Government. However, the people must be prepared ultimately to take this responsibility on themselves. In following pages the efforts made by the Committee are described in details.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY NETAJI MEMORIAL COMMITTEE TO BRING NETAJI'S SACRED ASHES TO INDIA

The meeting of the members of All India Freedom Fighters Organisation held on 26th June, 1989 in New Delhi discussed the letter of 10 May, 1989 of Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, the then External Affairs Minister. We, the members of All India Freedom Fighters Organisation believe that :

1. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, who had been twice President of Indian National Congress, Head of Provisional Government of Free India (recognised by nine Sovereign States) and Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army, died in air crash at Taihoku in Taiwan on 18th August, 1945. He was admitted to Nanmon Military Hospital where he was declared dead by Captain (Dr.) Taneyoshi Yoshimi, Incharge of the hospital. Colonel Habib-ur-Rehman, Deputy Chief of Staff of Indian National Army, who survived was the only Indian to witness this tragic end and to perform the last rites of the Liberator of India.
2. Colonel Habib-ur-Rehman carried the sacred ashes of Netaji to Tokyo where the mortal remains of Netaji were received by bereaved Indians and 45 Tokyo cadets of the Indian National Army. The sacred ashes were placed in a golden casket and

handed over to the priest of Renkoji Temple, Tokyo, where they are still lying under the trusteeship of both the priest and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Academy, Tokyo.

3. It is our misfortune that the sacred ashes of this great National Leader, who liberated us from British subjugation at the cost of his life, are lying in a foreign country for the last 45 years without being paid homage by a grateful nation. How painful it is that the Union Government is still reluctant to bring the ashes because of a so called controversy about the death of Netaji in air crash although two commissions appointed by the Union Government confirmed that Netaji died in air crash, on 18th Aug., 1945 at Taihoku Aerodrome in Taiwan.
4. This meeting of All India Freedom Fighters Organisation, including old associates of Netaji and Officers and men of the INA have come to the conclusion that the imaginary controversy about the death of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in air crash will continue for ever. We, therefore, resolve that the sacred ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, be brought from Japan to India under the auspices of All India Freedom Fighters' Organisation before 23rd January, 1990 to provide an opportunity to the grateful nation to pay homage to their Liberator and to build 'Shaheed Smarak' in memory of their leader and the martyrs, who laid down their lives at the altar of Bharat Mata.
 1. SHEEL BHADRA YAJEE, Ex. M.P.
Working President, A.I.F.F.D.
 2. S.S. YADAVA, Capt. I.N.A.
General Secretary
 3. SHASHI BHUSHAN, Ex. M.P.
General Secretary
 4. V.L. SUNDER RAO
General Secretary

**GOVERNMENT AWAITS EMERGENCE OF A
NATIONAL CONSENSUS**

(Letter to Shri Yajee regarding Netaji's Ashes)

**MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
INDIA**

No. C./551/13/81-JP

May 10, 1989

Dear Shri Yajee,

Please refer to your letter No. AIFFD/N/1/89 of 4th April, 1989 addressed to the Prime Minister suggesting that the mortal remains of the late Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose be brought back to India, from Renkoji temple in Tokyo, where they stand presently kept.

We all revere Netaji and hold his memory in the highest esteem. We would be reluctant, therefore, to do anything which might, directly or indirectly, add to the controversy about his remains.

I am sure, you will therefore, agree that it would be worthwhile to await emergence of a clear national consensus

on the question, which alone can enable the Government to take a final decision in the matter.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
(P.V. Narasimha Rao)

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee,
Working President,
All India Freedom
Fighters' Organisation,
7, Jantar Mantar Road,
New Delhi.

GOVERNMENT TAKES A SAFE STAND

(Letter to Shri Joychandra Singh regarding Netaji's Ashes)

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
INDIA

No. 1665-EAM/84

New Delhi
June 21, 1984

Dear Shri Joychandra Singh,

Please refer to your letter of 23rd May 1984, addressed to the Prime Minister, suggesting that the remains of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose should be brought to India from the Renkoji Temple in Tokyo where they are at present.

As your letter itself suggests, you are aware of the controversy surrounding this question, including the serious reservations expressed by some members of Netaji's family. This controversy has figured in our media from time to time and also in the Parliament.

I need hardly state that we all hold Netaji in very high esteem. But, at the same time we would be reluctant to do anything which might only add to the controversy surrounding Netaji's remains. Your letter gives the impression of

possible rethinking on the part of some members of the Netaji family on this question. It would be better if those members of the Netaji family who have been opposed to this idea in the past were to formally communicate their view to us, particularly if they think differently now.

I fully agree with you that there should be a national consensus on this question before the Government takes a formal decision so that a controversy in any form is avoided at a later stage. Any efforts on your part towards this end would be most welcome.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
(P.V. Narasimha Rao)

Shri L. Joychandra Singh
Prajatantra Buildings
Imphal
(Manipur)

**SISIR KUMAR BOSE ENDORSES THE
RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY NETAJI
MEMORIAL COMMITTEE**

(Letter to the Prime Minister)

BASUNDHARA
90, Sarat Bose Road
Calcutta-700026

26 September, 1985

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee, Working President, All India Freedom Fighters Organisation, saw me yesterday about the question of bringing the ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose to India from Japan. He told me that he had met you recently in this connection. He showed me the text of the resolution adopted by the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation in this regard at its convention held in Madras in September 1983. He told me also that in this matter they had the support of Col. P.S. Raturi on behalf of the All India INA Association,

I made it very clear to Shri Yajee that so far as I was concerned the issue was a national one because I knew that

to Netaji his family was coterminous with his country. I agree with Shri Yajee that the resolution of the Freedom Fighters Organisation reflected the unspoken desire and wishes of millions of Netaji's countryman and also innumerable Indians abroad. There can therefore be no objection on my part to the Government of India taking necessary and proper steps on the lines proposed in the resolution.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose

Shri Rajiv Gandhi
Prime Minister of India
New Delhi

AN APPEAL BY INDIANS ABROAD TO BRING NETAJI'S ASHES TO INDIA

During my recent tour to Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore, the Azad Hind Fauz personnel (INA) and the prominent Indians who were attached to Netaji Subhas have expressed all their support to bring the remains of Netaji from Renkoji Temple in Tokyo to India. They have suggested that a worthy Memorial to Netaji and Azad Hind Fauz should be raised in front of the Red Fort or the ~~Gateway of India~~, or *Gate* adjacent to Raj Ghat.

These people whom I met in Bangkok, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur have fully confirmed the air crash accident and the death of Netaji. They had organized meetings and paid their homage to Netaji when the air crash accident was announced. They never doubted the air crash news and none of them claimed that Netaji was alive. On the other hand, they were sorry for the Government of India and Indian people for not taking any initiative to raise the memorials for the martyrs, who gave all their riches, sacrificed their lives during the struggle for Freedom under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. They were very clear that it

was the duty of the people of India or the Government to take the initiative in this regard.

On the 13th of April I reached Bangkok and stayed there for four days. I discussed this issue with Shri Darshan Singh Bajaj, President of Thai-Bharat Club along with Shri K.L. Matta. This club is an active patriotic organisation founded by Swami Satyanand Puri who died in the air crash, along with Giani Pritam Singh and Major Akram Khan I.N.A., when they were on their way to Tokyo to have negotiations with Mr. Tojo, the then Prime Minister of Japan in 1943.

On 17th I went to Singapore, where I met Shri D.P. Kumra, Shri M. John Jacob and Shri Gurbaksh Singh who were the pioneers of I.N.A. and the Freedom Struggle. They gave me a lot of material and expressed their wholehearted cooperation to our Committee. They also urged me to pressurise the Government of India to discharge its duties towards the martyrs of our Freedom and the great revolutionary leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who liberated our country.

From there I went to Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) where I found that the INA organisation is functioning even now. Shri Amrick Singh Gill who was in charge of the secret service of the Indian National Army, published a book giving complete data of the personnel of the Secret Service.

Mr. V.S. Vengadesan, who was in the 45 Tokyo Cadre and two dozen INA Officers attended the meeting on 25th at Kuala Lumpur. Messrs N. Veeraiah, S.P. Narayana Swami, Varahalu and his son Narasimha Rao and several people representing Netaji Centre are very active and still keeping the flag of Netaji flutter high in the sky.

Mr. John Jacob in Singapore has kept with him a teeth of Netaji extracted in 1943 by Dr. Chellte Sundaram at Penang, which was presented to him by the doctor after he came back from the battlefield of Manipur. The present Government in Singapore did not take any steps to preserve any insignia of the Azad Hind Fauz. INA war Memorial was destroyed by Lord Mountbatten. The palatial building where

Netaji was staying during the historic Freedom Struggle could not be protected by them. Netaji's house on Mayer Road near the coast was situated in such a way that in case of any emergency he could be whisked away in a submarine to an unknown destination. This house is now broken and in its place a multi-storeyed building is about to come up. What are the Government of India or the people of India doing about it.

Indian citizens in these countries are occupied with their business and personal activities. If Indian Government and Indian people take necessary steps, we can always expect proper cooperation and help from these Governments and people. So, let us proceed on this assumption and do our best. These are the feelings of our own people who took part in the last battle of our Freedom Struggle, staking their kith and kin, their fortunes and lives and everything in the battle fields, starting from Singapore, Kualalumpur, Bangkok and Rangoon to liberate their own Bharat Mata. This is what I can convey to my countrymen on behalf of the fraternity of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

New Delhi

1-5-1990

Sd/-

(V.L. Sunder Rao)

Member, All India Netaji Memorial Committee

AN APPEAL BY THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN

Dated April 1983

Ref. : An Appeal to former Officers and the people concerned with INA regarding the ashes and remains of late Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Gentlemen,

Thirty eight years have passed since Late Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose died in an air crash at Taiwan Air Port on 18th day of August 1945. We, who knew Netaji, have been observing his birthday on January 23rd and his death anniversary on August 18th every year and we feel very sad and sorry to say that the ashes and remains of this Great Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose who was a supreme commander of INA and a leader of Provisional Government of Free India are still in Renkoji Temple at Tokyo and have not been returned to his motherland up to now.

We have contacted our Foreign Deptt. many a times and the answer was that the Indian Government has not yet recognized his death and that they cannot do anything but wait. Even the Indian Embassy in Japan gave the same answer,

However, you must understand that the longer we keep waiting, the number of people who know and respect Netaji will become less and less and at the end there will be nobody to pay respect to his remains about which we feel very sorry.

Therefore, we appeal to his comrades, the former officers and people concerned with INA to get the Netaji's ashes and remains back to India and may his ashes rest in peace in River Ganga.

Your sincerely,
Tadashi Katakura
President.
Masao Hayashi
Secretary

NETAJI'S DEATH CERTIFICATE

(2) The death certificate

Name : Chandra Bose

Reason for death : For got burn to all body.
The three (3) Grade burn

Death date : August 18, 1945.

Reason : At about 18.00 O' clock August 18, 1945 in Taipei-Matsuyama airport, airplane Chandra Bose boarded, fell to the ground and burned, he was very heavy No. 3 grade burned to all body.

Progress : Immediately entered the Minami—Mon Bunin of Taipei army hospital and treated the burnt all body, and made transfuse fluids and drink sulphur medicine and anodyne.

By all means of hospital function treated him, but died away on past 11.00 (eleven) same day night.

Above all mentioned I should certificate.

August 13, 1988.

338 OAZA-Takajo-MACHI Takajo-MACHI Kira-
morohata-GUN Miyajoki-KEN

Doctor Taneyoshi Yoshimi (fix stamp)

With kind regards

Your sincerely
(T. SHIMODA)

JAPANESE DELEGATION VISITS IMPHAL

L. Joychandra Singh

Prajantra Buildings, Imphal
Manipur, India
August 30, 1989

Shri V.L. Sunder Rao
General Secretary FFCC
Neb Sarai
New Delhi-110030

Dear Shri V.L. Sunder Rao,

I have got a letter from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Academy, Tokyo today. It is a very good news for us.

The 43rd death Anniversarry of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was held at Renkoji temple, Tokyo on 18 August 1989. A large number of ex-soldiers including Lt. Aribnabu, Mr. Hayashi, Secretary, NSCB Academy, Mrs Emory, Mr. T. Shimoda also attended the function,

For the first time, a high Official of Indian Embassy Tokyo also attended the function. He is Dr. S.B. Sinha,

Counsellor of Embassy of India. Tokyo. One lady from Bombay Mrs. B. Bindu Bose also attended the function (I have got photo copy of the function). Lt. Aribnabu and Mr. Hayashi spoke about Netaji. Mr. Emori (her mother was the founder of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Academy) announced at the function that she would construct a Netaji Bust and it will be installed in front of Renkoji Temple next year on the day of 44th death Anniversary of Netaji.

When the foreign people are giving so much respect to Netaji, it is very pity to see that Indians who enjoy the fruits of freedom ignored him.

Yours sincerely

Sd./-

Joychandra Singh

TRANSFER OF MONEY FROM AZAD HIND BANK TO THE RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

There is a lot for the Government of India to answer about the money of the Azad Hind Bank transferred to the Indian Government by the Japanese and Burmese Governments. I would like to cite very important information which came to light recently. One Late Shri V.K. Challiah Nadar resident of Burma asked the Japanese Government to deposit the money earned by him from the supply of copper to Japan to the Azad Hind Bank in Rangoon. After the war Shri Challiah's Son, Shri V.K.C. Ramalinga Nadar now residing at No. 27, Cemetery Road, Madras-600021, started correspondence with Japanese Government as to how much money was transferred to Azad Hind Bank at Rangoon and what became of the same after the war. The Japanese Government have written to him that the entire amount was transferred to the Government of India and asked him to approach them. the total amount in gold coins and cash remittance worked out to Rs. 42,33,04000 : Then Shri Ramalingaiah Nadar started correspondence with the Government of India, who in turn asked him to approach Reserve Bank of India. In this connection, it is said, that Netaji carried 14 boxes of treasure

with him from Bangkok and nothing was heard about them later on.

Some years back, I wrote a few articles in the National Herald on this subject. I also addressed the Government of India to institute a Commission which should visit Far Eastern Countries and collect necessary details in respect of details about martyrs, the contributions made by Indians and submit the report to the Nation.

In conclusion, I suggest that the fraternity of Netaji should impress upon, the Government of India to utilise the funds contributed by Nadar family in establishing Netaji University in New Delhi.

(V.L. SUNDER RAO)
General Secretary, AIFFO

Following is the letter by Shri V.K. Challoh Nadar to the Government regarding the payment of money transferred from Burmese Government to the Government of India and its reply.

From :

V.K. Challoh Nadar,
No. 27, Cemetary Road,
Madras-600021

To

The Under Secy. to the Govt. of India,
Ministry of Finance, Deptt. of Economic Affairs
New Delhi

Dear Sir,

Sub.—Payment of Rs. 42,33,04,000 transferred from Govt. of Burma to Govt. of India—I/o deposit in respect of supply of Copper to Japan Govt.

*Ref.—Your letter Not F. 10/62/EC/79 dated 21-4-80
My letter dated 29th April, 1980*

I invite your kind attention to my second letter cited above. In response to your letter first cited, I had furnished all the detailed particulars, but so far I have not heard anything from you in this regard.

CASH REMITTED WITH ACCOUNT NO. ETC.

Challiah Nadar	12/11/2604	Rs. 7,94,00000
Ramalinga Nadar	12/11/2605	Rs. 5,04,00000
Valliammul	12/11/2606	Rs. 7,90,00000
Parisperathy Annal	12/11/2607	Rs. 12,60,00000
Guruswamy Nadar	12/11/2609	Rs. 8,85,04000
TOTAL		<u>Rs. 42,33,04000</u>

GOLD COINS

V.K. Challiah Nadar	A/c No. as above	3980	Thicklea
C. Ramalinga Nadar	„	2800	„
Vallia Annal	„	1565	„
Parisperathy Annal	„	6100	„
Guruswamy Nadar	„	1640	„
		<u>14105</u>	

I pray that immediate and appropriate action may kindly be taken in the matter.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-
(V.K. CHALLIAH NADAR)

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA
(Department of Banking Operation & Development)
15, Netaji Subhas Road,
Post Box 2310
CALCUTTA-700001

Ref. : DBOD (Cal) No. 1305/Liq. 3-80 10th Sept., 1980

Shri V.K. Challiah Nadar,
New No. 69, Cemetery Road,
Old Washermanpet,
MADRAS-600021

Dear Sir,

Payment of Rs, 42,33,04,000 transferred from Govt. of Burma to Govt. of India—Deposit in respect of supply of copper to Japan Govt. with the Azad Hind Bank.

With reference to your letter dated the 14th August, 1980, we advise having referred the matter to the Chief Accountant, Department of Accounts & Expenditure, Reserve Bank of India, Central Office, Bombay-400001. Further Communication in this regard may please be addressed to him.

Yours faithfully
Sd/-
for Joint Chief Officer

SOVIET SCHOLARS REVISE OPINION ON NETAJI

Two Soviet Indologists have paid rich tributes to the role of the Indian National Army and Subhas Chandra Bose in the independence struggle.

Soviet scholars have now revised their earlier negative opinion of Netaji and the Indian National Army.

Dr. Poddubni, in his paper "Subhas Chandra Bose and struggle for India's independence", notes that Netaji was a revolutionary and patriot who would always be remembered by the Indian people. "He loved his motherland and the ancient culture of India and was always ready to sacrifice everything for the cause of the country's freedom."

The other Indologist, Prof. Raikov, traces the history of evolution of the Indian National Army and refutes the contention that it was a stooge in the hands of the Japanese.

Both aired their views in two papers submitted at the recently concluded conference of Indologists of Soviet Union.

Dr. Poddubni, speaking about various phases in the life of Netaji, notes that Marxist ideas and successes of

the Soviet experience had made a deep imprint on his mind though he insisted that India would adopt a different form of socialism based on Indian nationalism. At the same time, he tried to convince his supporters and opponents in the Indian National Congress of the need to pay more attention to economic and social problems of the country.

Dr. Poddubni repudiated the notion that Netaji was in sympathy with fascism. When Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union, Netaji was in Rome and wrote a letter to the foreign minister of Germany saying that in a war between Germany and the Soviet Union, the sympathies of Indians would be in favour of Russia.

Nazi leaders wanted Bose to stay in Germany so that they could make use of his presence there for propaganda purposes. He not only refused to stay but, before leaving for Japan, advised Indian soldiers in Germany to refuse to fight against the Soviet Union. Had he not left for Tokyo, he would have landed in a Nazi prisoner camp, Dr. Poddubni contended.

Later the Indian legion in Germany was asked to march against the Soviet Union on the eastern front, which it refused. Many of them were executed and given 40 different types of punishment. Their refusal to collaborate with Nazi Germany was inspired by Netaji.

“Under the shield of alliance with Japan, Bose wanted to accomplish anti-imperialist cause of fighting against British colonialists.”



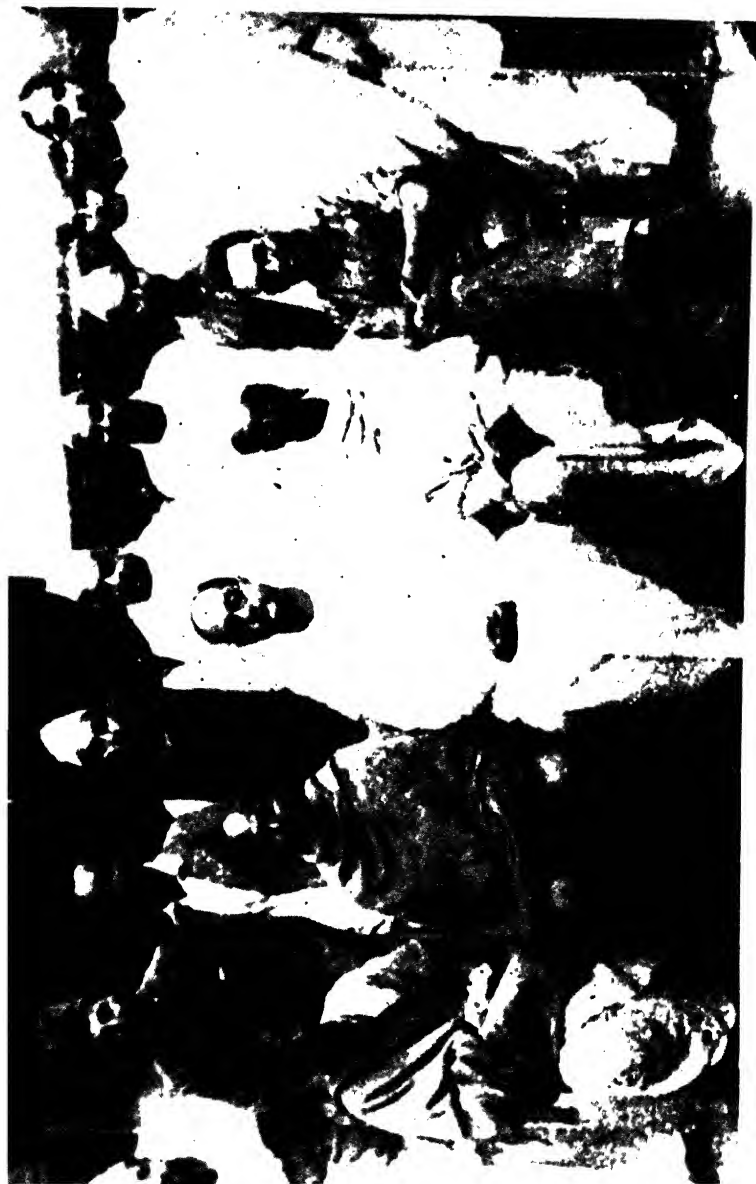
Shri Yajee in Rajasthani attiro.



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose with Gandhiji



Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru being garlanded by Shri Shcel Bhadra Yajee.



Revolutionary leaders of the All India Forward Bloc with Netaji.



Netaji Subhas with Jawaharlal Nehru at Tripuri, March 1939.



Netaji Subhas Bose and his Secretary Abid Hussain Saffrni during their Sub-marine voyage from Berlin to Singapore.



Netaji Subhas with Sardar Patel and Acharya Kripalani at Tripuri Congress Session, March 1939.



**Shri Yajee felicitating Smt. Indira
Gandhi on her 63rd birthday.**



Mukandlal Sircar, the great revolutionary leader, patriot and follower of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.



Shri H.V. Kamath who resigned from I.C.S. to follow the footsteps of Netaji till his last breath.



Shri Yajee with Nana Saheb Patel of 'Patri Sarkar' fame of Quit India Movement at a public function.



Leaders of the Freedom Fighters Organisations gathered at the Merger Conference held in Bangalore. Seen in the photograph are late Baba Prithvi Singh Azad, late Shri S.N Somayajulu, late Pandit Parmanand Jhansi, Shri Yajee and the author.



Shri Yajee with the Vice President Shankar Dayal Sharma at Dr. Vishwmitra Upadhyay's book release function.



Shri Yajee and prof. Ranga with the author and his wife Smt. Annapurna Devi at their sixtieth birthday celebrations.



Former president Giani Zail Singh with the members of the All India Freedom Fighters Organisation.



A recent photograph of Shri Yajee
—age has not been able to blunt the
determination in his eyes.



Shri Yajeeji during middle age.



Shri Yajee addressing a conference in



Shri Yajee in a pensive mood.



**Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose with
Shri Ras Bihari Bose at Singapore.**



**Indian National Army (I.N.A.)
Memorial at Moirang in Manipur
—yet another milestone of Shri Yajee's
achievements.**



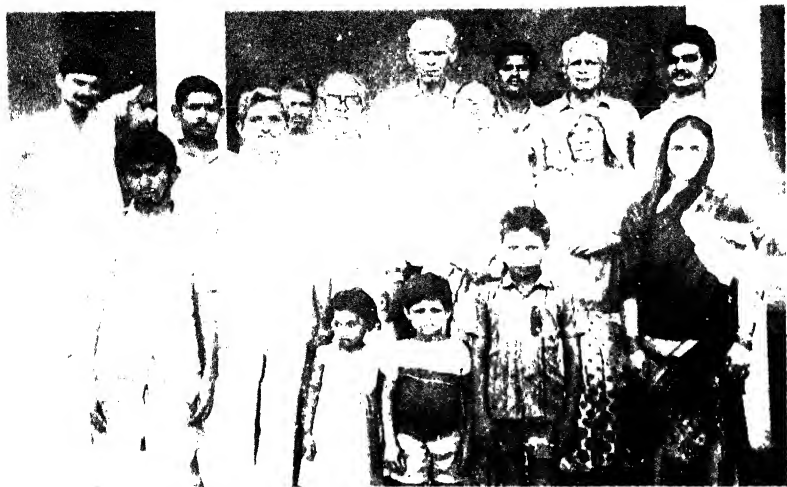
**Author with Moirang Singh who was
instrumental in leading the INA from
Rangoon to Moirang.**



**Netaji's statue at INA Memorial,
Moirang.**



Former Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi being greeted by Shri Yajee on behalf of the Freedom Fighters. Prof N.G. Ranga, Shri Buta Singh, Shri Shashi Bhushan and Shri Manmath Nath Gupta are also seen in the photograph.



Members of Shri Yajee's family at village Bakhtiyarpur in Bihar.



Mrs. Anita pfaff, daughter of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose with her husband Dr. Martin pfaff and the author.



Netaji's sacred ashes are kept in this gold casket which is still at Renkoji Temple in Tokyo.



Members of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Academy of Tokyo, Japan during their recent visit to Manipur.



The author felicitated Shri Yajeeji on his birthday.

